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TWO YEARS

OF THE

EASTERN QUESTION.

BY

A. GALLENGA,

AUTHOR OF "ITALY RE-VISITED," ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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"PERCHÈ COSTANTINOPOLI E DEL MONDO
LA MIGLIOR PARTE OCCUPA IL TURCO IMMONDO?
* * * * * *
CACCIAL D' EUROPA" * * *

Ariosto, ORLANDO FURIOSO, xvii. 75, 77.

A PROFESSION OF FAITH.

I was in the East the best part of the period elapsing between the outbreak of the Herzegovinian insurrection and the declaration of the Russian War. I watched events under the impression that the office of their recorder was not that of an advocate, but that of a judge or juryman, and that however difficult it might be for mere man to place himself beyond the bias of sympathies and antipathies, his duty would be fulfilled so long as his sentence or verdict left him at peace with his conscience.

The highest compliment ever paid to a writer was from a lady, who, having read an essay upon some subject in which sectarian controversy was inevitable, declared she was "puzzled to make out whether the author was Catholic or Protestant." Writing on matters connected with the Ottoman Empire and the Eastern question, I do not think it likely that any doubt may arise as to my being Christian or Mussulman, but I should certainly object to the decision of those—and there are many

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both East and West—who seem to think it imperative on every man to be either Turk or Russian, who, upon any word being written which may seem to them disparaging to their "Dear Turks," are ready to stigmatise the writer as "a Muscovite Agent."

As a man and a Christian, born of a nation which aspired to emancipation and achieved it, the cause of the vanquished and the oppressed, naturally and in the abstract, recommends itself to my feelings, but even then—*Magis amica Veritas.*

THE AUTHOR.

LLANDOGO, MONMOUTHSHIRE,
July 31*st*, 1877.

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TWO YEARS

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CHAPTER I.

EASTWARD BOUND.

ROME TO CONSTANTINOPLE.—THE GATE TO THE EAST.—ROME TO BRINDISI. — BRINDISI. — ITS CONDITIONS AND PROSPECTS. — THE GREEK ISLANDS. — SYRA. — CONSTANTINOPLE. — THE EASTERN QUESTION.—ITALIAN, PAPAL, AND AUSTRIAN VIEWS OF THE SUBJECT.

In the month of November, 1874, I had gone to Rome to see the Pope die. This was not the first nor yet the second time that I visited the Holy City on the same fool's errand. My friends in the Piazza di Spagna had become accustomed to my presence and familiar with my business, and they laughed at me, and asked if I did not know that "*Morto un Papa se ne fa un altro;*" and if I was so ingenuous as to suppose that the death of a Pope could ever involve the end of the Papacy; they suggested that one who had been made infallible

might also be gifted with immortality, and that, at all events, Pius IX. was no lion on whose dead hide any man could reckon, and would be as likely to bury me and all the rest, as to gratify the curiosity of those who speculated on the vacancy of the Holy See and the issue of the next Conclave.

The Pope was ill; the Pope got well; November day was dark and gray; and the prospect before me by no means cheerful. The Roman season began under dull auspices; Italian politics were flat, and I had hired apartments where the sun only shone when he was not wanted. I walked round the Pincio till I was tired; I read half the novels in Piale's library, but vainly struggled against the conclusion that even Rome could, in certain circumstances, be a tiresome place, and that time hung rather heavily upon me.

One may imagine with what electric thrill I received a letter which bade me shift my quarters from the Tiber to the Bosphorus, to quit too well-known scenes for a region which was to me *terra incognita*, and where I was told I should witness "the Agony and Death of a Sick Old Man—older and more sick than the Pope himself—that I should be present at the reading of his last will and testament, and report any squabbles which might arise as to the settlement of his inheritance."

I was going to watch some of the phases of the solution of the great Eastern Question.

From Rome to Constantinople one travels now on

the long obliterated track followed by the first Christian Emperor, when he removed his triumphant eagles from the old to the new capital of his world-wide empire. After more than fifteen centuries we tread *per vias antiquas*, and the great gate opening from the Western to the Eastern world is again that *Brundusium*, where one stay-at-home Roman poet said good-bye to another Roman poet Eastward bound.

The first stage of my journey took me from Rome to Caserta, on the way to Naples, whence I struck across the Apennines by the line which goes through Benevento to Foggia and Barletta, and there I met the great maritime line, over which the Overland Mail is conveyed from Turin and Bologna to Brindisi. I had left Rome at eleven o'clock in the evening and reached Brindisi on the ensuing evening at six, thus accomplishing in nineteen hours a distance which a good express could and ought to go over in twelve.

The Italian coast on the Adriatic exhibits already, both in the look of the country and in the features of the people, a semi-Oriental character. We are here in Magna Grecia, and the heel as well as the toe of the Italian Boot—Puglia as well as Calabria—bear the distinct marks of that ancient civilisation which set in with the tide of Greek colonists, and which the vicissitudes of after-times were in a great measure powerless to affect. As the traveller breaks through the Apennine gorges after Benevento, he

advances across the *Tavoliere di Puglia*, a granary now as it was in ancient Roman times; a vast, wind-blown, perfectly flat surface, unlike any other region in Italy, and for a parallel to which one must go to the fertile but dreary and desolate districts of Castile and Aragon. There is not a tree, not a bush in sight—nothing living or telling of life, save here and there, at great distances, some huge farm-house, with high fencing walls and turrets, the tokens of former insecurity, and in the home-field around it a shaggy herd grazing, tended by a herdsman still shaggier. There is nothing to relieve that even, ocean-like, monotonous vastness. The mountains in your rear vanish in the autumn haze before you are in sight of the ridge of the Gargano, a long, smooth ridge dipping in the sea far away on your left, and forming the clumsy spur above the heel of the Boot. As the railway trends seawards from Foggia to Barletta, the look of the country improves. The land is still level, but it teems with the vine, the olive, and the mulberry. A few evergreen oaks and stone-pines tower aloft over the orchards; the acacia lines the railway track, and each station has its attempts at flower-beds and shrubberies, as on the Rhine or in Switzerland. Towns, villages, and isolated houses, however, as you hurry past Barletta, Trani, Bari, etc.—almost invariably white-washed and flat-roofed — prepare you for the sight of Eastern habitations. One may fancy what they must look like in the long summer

days, glaring and grilling in the sun, unrelieved by the shelter of a tree or by the shade and freshness of more sober hues.

The movement along the line and at the stations was considerable; the peasantry are in the main a well-dressed and well-to-do-looking people, for Puglia, unlike Calabria and Sicily, is an orderly, laborious, law-abiding community. In my first class carriage, however, I was alone till I picked up a bevy of priests of high rank, in fine long robes, purple stockings, and with large golden crosses on their breasts: portly bishops and sleek Monsignors, attended by their almoners, bearing witness to the thriving condition of a part at least of the clergy in Italy—even after so many years of the squabble between Church and State—and explaining the squalor and poverty of so large a mass of the lay population.

It was night, but not dark, at Brindisi when I arrived, for the moon, struggling to break through the clouds, was still bright enough to light up the port with its shipping and the surrounding scenery.

I had all my life longed to see this spot which played so important a part in the ancient world, and for which I thought, and still think, the revival of Italy may have a no less splendid future in store. I was grieved to see the long faces with which the people at the new Grand East India Hotel greeted my solitary presence. The Overland Mail was ex-

pected that very evening, Thursday, at nine o'clock; and I thought the smoke of the Peninsular and Oriental steamer would have been a sight to gladden my landlord's heart; but he shook his head and looked seaward with blank dejection; a state of mind which was presently explained by the arrival of the dark leviathan, which hardly loomed along the quay for twenty minutes, landed the passengers and their luggage in hot haste, and then steamed away out of sight without delay, while the travellers proceeded at once—several omnibusfuls—to the station, leaving not a shilling or a rupee or a piastre for mine host of the *Indie Orientali*, or for his waiters, porters or boots, to bless themselves with!

Of the many illusions into which Italian patriots dived during their struggle for emancipation, none, apparently, led to a more prompt and woeful disappointment than their expectation respecting the leading part that would be assigned to Brindisi as the great mart of Eastern trade. The hopes they built on the untold millions they would make out of the conveyance of the Overland Mail throughout the whole length of the Peninsula were as senseless as the fears entertained by Marseilles and the French railway companies at the prospect of losing it; and both countries looked with breathless interest to the completion of that Mont-Cenis Tunnel, which, coinciding with the opening of the Suez Canal, was to give the Italian Peninsula, thrown as it is like a great wharf athwart a large extent of the

Mediterranean, the monopoly of Levantine and Asiatic navigation. Tunnels and canals, however, are only the highways of commerce; they are not commerce; highways are merely the channels of produce, but are themselves unproductive. Before the Italians abandoned themselves to their sanguine anticipations, they should have considered what goods they had to sell or to purchase; or, otherwise, what means they possessed for fetching and carrying other people's goods. I was at Rome and bound for Constantinople, and, on inquiring my way, was told that I had a choice between the Austrian Lloyd steamers that touch at Brindisi, and the French Messageries steamers which rendezvous at Naples. Strange to say, no one in the Italian capital seemed to know anything of the Italian line of *La Trinacria,* whose steamers, as I afterwards learned, plied between the Sicilian and South-Italian coasts and the East; the company still surviving now under the new name of *Florio and Co.* That line, however, was struggling into existence under difficulties; it lost much time in commercial transactions at the intermediate ports, and in fact could ill withstand the competition with its French and Austrian rivals in the conveyance of mails and passengers. These French and Austrian and the English Peninsular and Oriental steamers have nearly the whole Eastern traffic in their hands, and they naturally only resort to Italian ports in so far as these suit their convenience. The English vessels

from Alexandria at first made Brindisi their terminus; they landed their mails and passengers and a part of their merchandise; and it is to this early period that Brindisi refers as the date of her short-lived prosperity; but now the steamer only lands the mails and such of her passengers as long for the termination of their sea-voyage, most of whom drive at once to the special or "International" train which is waiting for them at the station; and, for the rest, she proceeds up the Adriatic to Ancona and Venice, bringing, in sober fact, nothing to Brindisi besides bustle and fuss, a week of tantalising hope to be followed by a day of bitter disappointment.

The fact is, national success has done all that could be expected towards making Italy a great trading community. It is now in the power of her people to reap all the benefit of their splendid position. Even at the moment I am writing, the Russo-Turkish war, by interrupting the ordinary traffic along the Danube, has given the companies of Mediterranean steamers the monopoly of the whole intercourse between the East and West. Of that trade and traffic it is in the power of the Florio or other Italian companies to have a large share. All the rivalry of Marseilles, all the petty intrigues of the French railway companies, cannot prevent Genoa becoming the Queen of the Mediterranean; nor can Ancona or Venice, or even Trieste, deprive Brindisi of the importance she has as the keeper of

the keys of the Adriatic. But in order that Italian ports may hold their own against their neighbours, they must, in the first place, become trading ports; they must establish their shipping and maritime enterprise on a larger scale. Their steam navigation companies, the Florio and Rubattino, must be conducted with wider and more generous views; and they must have a striving, working, trading country, as well as an intelligent and provident government, to back them. The Italians must work out their well-being by their own exertions, well knowing that other people will not allow them a greater share of their gains than they can help.

I had never before seen Brindisi, and could not compare its present state with what it was fifteen years before, when it was rescued from Bourbon rule. But that there was progress in the place, and that its inhabitants were doing tolerably well, one might perceive at a glance. The harbour is not large, but well sheltered and almost land-locked, and broad and handsome quays have been made with sufficient depth of water to allow the largest steamers to moor close to them, enabling passengers to walk on board—a convenience scarcely to be met with anywhere else in the Mediterranean.

I walked in and about the town, and saw with pleasure that the old well-paved and smooth, though narrow, Strada Maestra and the more spacious Strada Amena were swept clean—cleaner than any week

I was to see for many months as I proceeded farther East. In the Strada Amena and other quarters large and handsome blocks of buildings with shops were rising; a proof, in spite of all the croaking of my landlord, that the place had faith in its destinies, and was decidedly looking up. In my opinion to deprive such a place as Brindisi of her future as the gate of the East would be impossible. It takes time before the movement of commerce can find its level, before trade can be diverted from the channels it has long followed, before a race prostrated for centuries like the Italian can make up its mind to be up and doing. But it all will come to pass in God's own good time.

An Austrian Lloyd steamer took me up at Brindisi, and wafted me across to Corfu; from this latter place another Austrian Lloyd steamer, two days later, threaded its way through the Greek Isles to Syra, and hence to the Dardanelles, and all along the Sea of Marmora to the famous group of the Three Cities at the southern entrance of the Bosphorus. Owing to a loss of twelve or thirteen hours at Syra, it took us three days and three nights to go from Corfu to Constantinople.

All the time during the voyage which was not taken up by the contemplation of the lovely scenery through which I was borne, along the lofty coasts and threading the maze of islands of the Ægean Sea, was employed by me in picking up whatever knowledge came into my way respecting the subject

on which I had undertaken to enlighten other people.

I had hitherto paid but little attention to the Eastern Question, and only heard that the interest the world felt about it had been recently awakened by the report of an insurrection in some districts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and by an untoward resolution of the Government of the Porte which defrauded the holders of Ottoman Bonds of one half of the interest of their shares. Dissolution through disaffection of her people, and bankruptcy through mismanagement of her finances, we were given to understand, threatened the Empire of the Sultan with the speedy fulfilment of its long-impending doom.

I need hardly say that in Italy men were heart and soul for the insurgents; for the Italians, and especially the Venetians, among whom I had lately lingered, had not forgotten how a few years ago the Austrian eagles were still perched on every steeple all over the pleasant land; they had felt what it is for a nation to have another nation's foot on its neck, and, apart from religious antipathy, they could not help feeling how far more unendurable masters the Turks must be than their own lately departed *Tedeschi*. Of the regions that stare at them from the other side of the Adriatic, even of the clusters of islands and peninsulas which they themselves subjugated and colonised in old Venetian times, the Italians know next to nothing; but they reasoned

that, as it had been proved that Roumania, Servia, and Montenegro could enjoy the blessings of self-government, not without some credit to themselves, and with absolutely no disturbance to their neighbours, there could be no reason why the same autonomy should not be extended to the Herzegovina, to Bosnia, and so on from district to district, till the Crescent should be driven to the minarets of Constantinople, in proper time to be forced across the Straits.

The Italians, it may be seen, had from the outset adopted the "neck and crop" theory of Mr. Gladstone. The Italians themselves had achieved such prodigies in their own country, that they could dream of no problem of which time might not bring an easy solution. They took little time to consider where another Re Galantuomo and a minister with a Cavour's brain were to come from to lay the basis of that South-Slavonian Empire of which men talked so glibly; they lost no time inquiring into the immediate or remote consequences of a disruption of the Ottoman Empire, and of a collision between the rival pretensions of Russia and Austria on the Danube, or of the jealousies between Russia and England as to the possession of the Bosphorus. All they knew was that the Christian subjects of the Porte were "men and brothers," and should not be made to submit to the Turks, who were "brutes." The question for Italian patriots was not on what footing the Osmanlis should hold their own in

Europe, the first and most urgent necessity being that they should take themselves off. The only partisans the Ottomans had in Italy were the priests, with the Pope at their head. The Herzegovinians, in the opinion of the Vatican, were "Freemasons and Garibaldians," and as such could only be enemies of God whether they rose against the Crescent or the Cross. This partiality of the Pope to the Turks did not fail, of course, to strengthen the Italian laity in their anti-Turkish prepossessions, at the same time that it inclined them to augur well for the progress of Turkey's enemies; for in the estimation of the Italians the poor Pope has the evil eye, and is sure to ruin any cause on which he bestows his blessings, as he almost invariably brings good luck to those against whom he hurls his curses.

When Italy was left behind, and as we were steaming under Austrian colours, this unanimity in favour of the Christian subjects of the Porte was no longer apparent. I had been at Trieste a few months before, almost upon the first outbreak of those Herzegovinian disturbances, and what I had then learnt, and what I now heard from the captains and officers of the Lloyd steamers and from the miscellaneous passengers bound to the same goal with me, soon enabled me to perceive that Austria's views on the Eastern Question were, and must for ever be, as hopelessly divided and pointing opposite ways as the two heads of the bird which

has almost prophetically been for so many years the cognisance of the House of Hapsburg.

The insurrection of the Herzegovina ought, on a first glance of the subject, to have caused the Kaiser as bad a quarter of an hour as the Sultan himself; for, if the Porte was threatened with the danger of losing those districts, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy ran the scarcely less evil chance of gaining them. A man whose next-door neighbour's house is on fire can enjoy no easy slumbers, and at Vienna, and still more at Buda-Pesth, the prevailing opinion seemed to be that it little mattered with what amount of bloodshed the Herzegovinian insurrection was quenched, so there might be peace on the Dalmatian, Croatian, and Slavonian frontier. For most of the statesmen in power in Austria the integrity of the Sultan's Empire was a vital necessity for the Kaiser's Monarchy: but there were other men, possessing influence at court, in the cabinet, in the army, and among a large part of the people, who thought, on the contrary, that the Kaiser's Monarchy could and should be made to rise on the ruins of the Sultan's Empire; that all Turkey's loss should be Austria's gain, and that, instead of attempting to uphold the Sultan, the Kaiser should favour every movement which might enable him to step into the Sultan's place.

It was not merely the Slavic party in some of the Austrian provinces, it was not merely General Rodich, the Governor of Dalmatia, or the Arch-

duke Albrecht, the conqueror at Custozza, and the most popular man in the Austrian army, that were supposed to look upon the aspirations of the Slavs of Herzegovina with outspoken favour. The Emperor Francis Joseph himself was supposed to have a leaning in that direction, and indeed it was openly asserted at Trieste and Ragusa that it was owing to the encouragement held out to them by the Kaiser during his summer trip across the Julian and Dinaric Alps that the Herzegovinians had ventured on a revolt for the success of which they must needs depend on other forces besides their own.

The conditions of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy were so far improved by the events of 1866, that, could the Eastern Question be for ever adjourned, the losses the Hapsburg-Lorraine dynasty suffered at Sadowa might be accounted clear gain. Austria at that juncture rid herself of Germany and Italy, and satisfied Hungary. By her scheme of a Dualism she put an equal amount of power into the hands of her own Germans and of the Magyars. Only in that arrangement she seemed to forget the Slavs—the most numerous of her subject races, and the one to which in recent struggles she has been indebted for her very existence. These Slavonians, although split up into many distinct tribes, and known under the various names of Dalmatians, Croatians, Slovenes, etc., although hardly knowing anything of each other, and understanding but little of each other's language, had been lately plied with

flattering notions of their common origin, and made to aspire to common destinies. These Southern Slavs in themselves were almost more than Austro-Hungary could manage; but what would be the case if they were to make common cause, and become one people with their brethren of Herzegovina, Bosnia, Servia, and other Turkish provinces, and give full development to that idea of a South Slavonian Empire, which might prove stronger than either the Kaiser or the Sultan, and absorb all Southern Europe from the Danube to the Bosphorus?

It seemed easy to some of the people at Trieste, and on board the Lloyd steamers, to suggest that the Austrian Monarch could easily, however, lay the storm which threatened him from the South Slavonian movement by putting himself at its head; that, by extending his protection to the Bosnians, Herzegovinians, or any other tribe attempting to shake off the yoke of the Porte, he could extend the limits as well as consolidate the foundation of his empire. But his Germans and his Magyars had found out that their master had already a great many more Slavonian subjects than they considered expedient, and Austria could only hope to become a great South Slavonian Monarchy by risking the loss of her German and of some of her Hungarian provinces, and exchanging Vienna, not merely for Pesth, as Prince Bismarck hinted, but for Constantinople—a consummation, whether or not desirable in the end, the means for which were not at hand.

It is easy to see from what has been said how troublesome and dangerous any insurrectionary attempt in the Turkish provinces must appear to those who direct the destinies of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The House of Hapsburg-Lorraine was standing on a pretty firm foundation so long as the Eastern Question was left untouched. But the moment that Question pressed forward for solution Austria fell into a state of perplexity from which she found it impossible to free herself, seeing equally formidable dangers before her in any resolution she might venture to take, and hardly any greater safety in a policy of indecision and inaction. This may explain the endless shifts and heroic *tours de force* Count Andrassy was driven to at various periods during these last two years. His contrivances hitherto, far from ridding him of the difficulties of his situation, have only involved him deeper and deeper into the meshes of a vacillating policy, and made his own position, that of his party, and that of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy more hopelessly entangled, indefinable, and untenable.

CHAPTER II.

THE CITY OF THE SULTAN.

A FOG.—CONTRABAND BOOKS.—STAMBOUL AND PERA.—GALATA.—THE STREETS OF PERA.—GOD'S WORK AND MAN'S.—A TURKISH CROWD.—TURKISH WOMEN.—SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF CONSTANTINOPLE.—PORTERS, HAWKERS, AND BEGGARS.—THE SULTAN AT MOSQUE.—THE SULTAN.

THE first impression a traveller receives on entering Constantinople has been often described, and by none so successfully as by one who had never seen the place. To venture upon the subject otherwise than by quoting the author of "Anastasius" would seem sheer rashness; to avoid it altogether might be considered a dereliction of duty. In my own case the horns of the dilemma had nothing formidable; the task of conveying my first impression of the place was rendered marvellously easy. Lovely weather had been with us from Rome to Brindisi, at Corfu, at Syra, in sight of "the fields where Troy was," and at both ends of the Dardanelles. There was a blaze of stars and a bright waning moon as I rose on a Friday, November 19th, 1875, at four o'clock in the morning, and paced the deck of the

Austrian Lloyd steamer *Vesta*, which was slackening speed as it neared the harbour. "Now then," I thought, "for the glories of the Golden Horn, of the domes and minarets of Stamboul, of the palaces and groves of the Bosphorus!" But, though the sea and sky were clear, a slight haze was clinging to the shore, which at break of day thickened into a dense mist, and veritable palpable fog, till a heavy curtain of clouds settled on the whole scene. Of Constantinople itself, of Pera, Galata, and Scutari I saw just as much as though at such an hour and day I had been steaming up from Gravesend to London Bridge, and of that an English reader hardly needs a description.

As the capital was, so I found also, upon landing, was the Government of the Sublime Porte—under a cloud. At the custom-house, where the boat landed me and my luggage, I was not unmindful of Murray's hint, and I instructed Spiro, the *commissionaire* of the hotel, to bribe his way without stint; but the spell did not work: the hand that pocketed my backsheesh was still held out for the keys of my portmanteaus. I had to stand by, and bear and grin, while dirty fingers rummaged into the deepest recesses of those sorry trunks, turning everything topsy-turvy, and fishing, not for tobacco, or cotton prints, or any other contraband goods, but, of all things in the world, for books! They took them all out, nine in number, one by one, looked knowingly and lovingly at the lettering and gilding, shook

them, raised them to their ears, and ended at last by piling them up together, tying them up with pack-thread, and in one word, seizing them, and dismissing me with an intimation that I could call for them when the official dragoman had satisfied himself that they contained no treasonable or incendiary matter—"nothing," they said, "disrespectful to the sacred person of the Sultan, nothing in disparagement of the wisdom of his ministers." I sent for the books twice the day after; sent again twice the next day; part of them came up by driblets: Ouida's "Signa," the "Dodds Family Abroad," were soon out of quarantine. Presently Murray's "Handbook" and Théophile Gautier's "Constantinople" were also released. There only remained Conder's "Turkey," but that, I was told, "was forbidden, and I should never see it again." It was a borrowed book, an odd, old little volume, a mere patchwork of other people's impressions and remarks about the country, chosen by the worthy compiler with all the partiality of an ardent Turkophile, and intended to paint the East and Eastern life as a sublunar Paradise. That book I was "never to get back." It was, and would for evermore remain, in the hands of the deep-searching interpreter, apparently busy in seeking in that cabalistic cento the clue to the tangled skein of the Eastern Question. "Shades of Omar and all the Khalifs!" I thought. "Fancy what an advanced stage that Eastern Question must have reached, how deeply faith in

the destinies of the Crescent must be shaken, when the good Mussulman turns censor of books; when, like a very Duke of Modena, a Sultan stoops to wage war against printed paper!"

I was unwilling to avow myself beaten. I called upon Sir Philip Francis, her Majesty's Consul-general and Supreme Judge of her Majesty's Court in the Levant, only too glad of an opportunity of making the acquaintance of one who became my staunchest friend in Constantinople as long as he lived. Sir Philip hardly allowed me time to state my case; he rang the bell for his smartest *cavass*, or guard of the consulate, and bade him in his own hot and hasty manner, "go down to the dragoman at the custom-house *with my curses*, and tell him to give up *instantly* the book So-and-So, taken from Mr. So-and-So, *instantly, on the spot, and see thou comest not back without it.*" He then bade me be seated, with a courtesy strangely contrasting with the strong language which he reserved for his dealings with the Turks, handed me one of his choicest havannahs, and before the cigar was smoked to the end, to be sure, old Josiah Conder's harmless rhapsody made its appearance, not much the worse for the pawing and fingering of the jealous Ottoman official.

I had never before been at Constantinople, but, like all travellers who have seen much, I had heard and read enough about it to be able to fancy what it was like. In many respects, indeed, the look of

the place only too faithfully reproduced the picture of my life-dream. But on one point, at least, I was strangely and grievously disappointed. I expected to find Stamboul a Turkish pig-sty, and Pera a Christian garden; the reverse turned out to be the case. Bad weather and the press of business combined for a few days to shut me up in this diplomatic and commercial semi-European suburb of Pera-Galata, and I can freely declare that nothing my experience of the worst Italian and Spanish towns ever made me acquainted with comes up to the horrors of this Oriental abode of the world's ambassadors. The Queen of the Bosphorus, as every one knows, consists of three cities. Two of them, Stamboul, or Constantinople proper, and Pera-Galata rise on hills on the European—the third, Scutari, on the Asiatic—side of the Strait. Stamboul and Pera-Galata are separated by the Golden Horn, a long, broad, and winding inlet of the sea, forming the harbour of Constantinople, and are joined by two long pontoon bridges, one at the harbour's entrance called "Karakeui Bridge," and the other a little more inland, being the "Old Bridge." Between the two a new iron bridge has been for a long time in progress of construction—a lofty, broad, and magnificent structure, which was nearly finished long before my arrival at Constantinople, and which remained "more unfinished than ever" two years later when I left the place.

Stamboul spreads out to the south, between the

Strait, the Golden Horn, and the Sea of Marmora, in the shape of a triangle, with its base on what are called the "Seven Hills," and its apex, the Seraglio Point, guarding the mouth of the Strait, and facing Scutari across it. To the north of Stamboul, across the Golden Horn, rises the hill round the base of which spreads the old Genoese suburb of Galata; and on its top, where once were groves and gardens, are now the palaces, the shops, the churches, the barracks of Pera. The two towns, Pera and Galata, are now to all intents and purposes one town; the old walls have almost everywhere disappeared, and with them every line of distinction between the lower or commercial and the upper or diplomatic quarter. The little level ground on the top of this steep hill is traversed throughout its length by what is called the Grande Rue de Pera. At its two ends there are thoroughfares practicable for carriages leading either to the bridges or to the open country; and all along the same Grande Rue there slopes down a labyrinth of narrow streets and hard steep steps, leading to various points on the shore of Galata and to several dingy Mohammedan quarters on the base of the hill on the land side. The Grande Rue or main street of Pera is in some points less than half the width of the Corso at Rome; the side streets and steps are hardly as broad as those one climbs in the most mountainous quarters of Genoa, or in what the oldest inhabitant remembers of the worst wynds in Auld Reekie. Round the base of

the hill or cone on which rises Pera-Galata, there runs a level street coasting the sea, and ending on one side at Hasskeui, where lies Ters-haneh, the maritime arsenal and naval dockyard, and at the other end, leading to Top-haneh, or the artillery yard, and farther off to the palaces of Dolmabacheh and Cheraghan, recent edifices raised by the Sultans for their town residences; what remains of the old Palace of Top-Capou, at the Seraglio Point at Stamboul, being merely reserved for great state-ceremonies. All along the lower Galata street, a busy thoroughfare, a tramway has lately been laid, and from the summit of Pera to the neighbourhood of Karakeui Bridge there is a tunnel, dignified under the name of Metropolitan Railway, by which the fatigue of the steep ascent can be avoided, provided no accident occurs to interrupt the traffic, as happens almost periodically every three months.

It rained in the evening and on the day after my arrival, and, after making a trial of all the pantoufles, gaiters, goloshes, patent overshoes and Russian bottines, and other contrivances that sympathising friends recommended, I came back thoroughly beaten to my hotel (the Angleterre, or Missirie's), convinced that walking, riding, driving, or, indeed, locomotion by any other means than a sedan-chair was out of the question. The pavement of huge, uneven, cruelly sharp-pointed stones had not, one would fancy, been ever taken up since the Genoese laid it down in the Middle Ages. Attempts

at drains or even open gutters seemed never to have been made; sweeping was an unknown practice—the black, thick, greasy, slippery, sticky mud collects in the huge holes everywhere yawning between the loose stones; and in every effort you make to pick your steps you are baffled by the throng of men and beasts—the men more irrational than the beasts—hurrying headlong on their errands, the carriages, the laden mules and asses, jumbled together at a dead-lock, threatening at every step to crush you unless you are wary and nimble enough to dash for a refuge into the open door of some of the quaint, dark, poky shops.

This, of course, is the Grande Rue, the only thoroughfare; the other streets, Rue des Postes, Rue de Pologne, etc., are streams in the rain, fetid beds of muddy rivers for days and weeks after it. Christians and Mussulmans are apt to call each other "dogs;" but one thinks with a shudder what the Pera streets would be if one had not to thank the loose dogs, which are here the only scavengers.

We had at last, fortunately, three and more days of such glorious sunshine as were never seen in November. The fresh, balmy air absorbed and swept away the taint of the accumulated impurities, and, with something of the feeling of Noah from the Ark, I broke from confinement, stepped down to the bridge, and across the harbour, walked up to Stamboul, crossed over in a caique into Asia, to the English cemetery at Haïdar Pasha near Scutari,

stood on the deck of a steamer for a trip up and down the Bosphorus as far as Therapia and Buyukdere, saw the Sultan going to Mosque in his gilt bucentaur, and, in short, took in at a bird's-eye view what "Eothen" calls the "splendour and havoc of the East."

Would it be believed that I found at Stamboul what I had vainly looked for in Pera? broad and comparatively well-swept streets—only too few, alas! —with smooth footpaths; large, fine open spaces with extensive views at the Porte, round the Seraskierate or War Office, at the Hippodrome, and in front of some of the Mosques; and, on the whole, practicable, habitable, hospitable quarters, with here and there symptoms of modern improvement and even refinement, setting forth to advantage the Sultans' tombs, the fountains and other relics of old Byzantine and Mohammedan art and civilisation. Only let the barriers of religious animosities be fully overthrown, only let a Christian have his choice of a residence, and there can be no European so utterly destitute of taste as not to prefer a sojourn in free-breathing, whitewashed Stamboul to that of cramped, stifled, dingy, and dreary Galata-Pera.

I was told that the miracle by which Stamboul has been and is being transformed is all owing to the blessing of its frequent fires; and I could enter with warm sympathy into the feelings of Nero, and share in his exultation that Rome—which must, even after Augustus "had found it brick and made

it marble," have been just such a jumble of wood and mud-hovels as nine-tenths of Constantinople are now—was being consumed by the flames before him; I could twang his guitar, and sing his pæans, and bless with him the devouring element which conquers men's sloth, stubbornness, and improvidence, strikes daylight into their foulest, plague-stricken nests, and enables some Hausmannising genius to lay his plans for those boulevards which are to give them air and space to breathe in, in spite of themselves. But, alas! the fire which has achieved but little for Stamboul though equally busy at Pera, Galata, or Scutari, has done next to nothing for their improvement.

Into what delightful residences could not Pera and Galata, and Stamboul, and Scutari, and Kadi-Keui or Chalcedon be made by a simultaneous application of the purifying process which they are, alas! only periodically undergoing? What combination of Naples and Lisbon, of Genoa and Edinburgh could make up so glorious an aggregate of human habitation as the Bosphorus would present from end to end, if the power, wealth, and intelligence of our modern world could, as it should, be made to bear upon it! Even as it now is, there is something in it that dazzles the eye with its quaintness and gorgeousness, and will not allow the mind to dwell on its meanness and squalor. What God has done, man, be he even a Turk, cannot wholly undo. Architecture is not and has, perhaps, never been at home in

Constantinople; it has only piled up huge ovens under the name of mosques, and reared slender white candlesticks and candles with black pointed extinguishers called minarets; it has lined the shores of the Strait with Sultans' palaces, kiosques, pavilions, Pasha's *yalis* or country mansions, long rows of buildings, light not elegant, white not tidy, with unmeaning arabesques and blank windows, charming at a distance, disappointing on a near approach, silent and lonely, splendid follies, many of them hardly ornamental and worse than useless.

The Christian homes themselves, as though dreading the contrast that any attempt at a style of their own might suggest, are rather stately and elegant than really tasteful. The English, Russian, and other ambassadorial palaces of Therapia and Buyukdere, abodes of bliss, which make their tenants loathe their not less sumptuous but dirt-beset, noisy, and cramped mansions at Pera, are conspicuously plain, when they are not baroque in their grandeur; nor has the gardener's art, except in a few spots, attained any higher degree of excellence than the builder's. Were it not for the cypresses of the cemeteries, the lovely shores of the Bosphorus, all except the lower fringe at the water-edge would be nearly as bare as the Dardanelles; and Pera-Galata does not even boast the little spots of green which dot here and there the irregular mass of buildings of triangular Stamboul.

Altogether, whether you look at it from the out-

side, where huge unsightly barracks constitute its framework, or venture into its dreary precincts where every view is obstructed, the hill on which Pera and Galata stand, in spite of its grand Embassies, is, in my opinion, the eyesore of the Bosphorus; and it is matter of great wonder and grief to me to think that so many diplomatic magnates, consuls, judges, and other European functionaries, rich bankers and merchants, should have been living here year after year, generation after generation, century after century, and yet never have clubbed together, never attempted joint action for improvement, never laid their wise heads together at least for a pavement—that they should have done nothing towards making the ground round their residences in any respect better than when the Italians first colonised it.

The Italians have at no time been particular for decency or cleanliness, and I have no sympathy with those æsthetic professors who look upon "dirty" and "picturesque" as synonymous; but the Italians were at least grand and daring and Titanic in their conceptions. Witness the time-defying remains of their battlemented houses and city walls here and there still standing in Galata; witness especially that Genoese tower, a structure of colossal and solid dimensions, and not destitute of a certain characteristic beauty, and which is sure to outlive all the edifices which either Byzantines or Turks have reared within reach of its vast panorama.

Yet improvement of some sort is going on at

Constantinople, and it is chiefly, if not exclusively, of European contrivance. I have already alluded to the two or three steep carriage-drives, the tunnel or underground railway, the tramways, the new still-born bridge; and I may now add the railway lines running from the City of the Sultan across those northern districts of Philippopolis and the Balkans, which were soon to become so familiar a theme of men's talk, and, on the other side, to Ismid or Nicomedia and Aidin, to be some day extended to Smyrna and throughout Asia Minor.

The change in the look of the inhabitants must needs keep pace with the alteration of the material conditions of the city; but it would not be easy to say whether it be equally for the better. The crowd at the approach of Karakeui Bridge on both sides, but especially on the Galata side, is appalling by its crush and confusion, but at the same time attractive and amusing in its quaint, wild, and fantastic variety. On no other spot in the world, perhaps, are the costumes, features, and tongues of the various tribes of the East and West blended and crowded together in more equal proportions. Nowhere else are the European cylinder, wide-awake, and billy-cock, bonnet and chignon, the Turkish fez, turban, and yashmak, the Persian barette, the Circassian kalpack, to be seen more densely swarming together in the motley mass of heads. Islam is now trousered and shod, and barring the hallowed fez, there is little in the buttoned-up, collarless, plum-

coloured frock, straight shirt-collar and black tie of a young *Turc de la Réforme* to distinguish him from the common attire of a shabby Parisian dandy.

The shoeblack brigade, an unknown institution I should fancy twenty years ago, is now as numerous as in Paris; much more so than in London. Of the Asiatic tribes, as a rule, only a mere rabble is to be seen walking, and hardly ever a lady. The throng of horsemen and carriages, hacks, or cabs, or broughams, is incessant, all-pervading, bewildering; —deafening, stunning, ear-piercing the shouts and yells of the thousand sellers of water, oranges, nuts, sweets, and other multitudinous wares. It is not without much storming and thundering, not without an immense amount of swearing by all the gods and the prophets, not without the frequent crack, and even the occasional cut of the whip, that sumptuous equipages with prancing outriders, white or black, can force their way through the shockingly unwashed, unshaven, and prodigiously tattered multitude. Go where you like about the main thoroughfares, visit the bazaars, get in and out of the Kirket-i-Hairieh steamers that ply along or across the Bosphorus, you have the same pushing, jamming tide of human beings setting in against, or ebbing away along with you. How the gentler sex fare in that turmoil may be easily imagined. The yashmak of Turkish women is nowadays a mere sham. It consists, as every one knows, of a coarse linen fold swathing the brow, with another gagging the mouth, the two

meeting on or about the bridge of the nose, and allowing an opening of an inch or so for the eyes. This only for the women of the people; those of higher rank substitute a thin veil of the thinness, though not of the shape, of the "fall" of European ladies, and, like it, answering the purpose of coquettishly exhibiting and enhancing the charms of the face it pretends to conceal. All you can see in the throng is an occasional pair of bold black eyes shining out of dirty yellow, dusky brown or downright Negro complexion. Fair moony faces, large dreamy orbs, and now and then an outline of exquisite features, with a vacant, dreamy expression, confront you from some of the carriage windows; but of the female figure you can form no other idea than that of a shapeless bundle of clothes, loosely hid by the *ferijeh*, a long blanket-like cloak, with broad sleeves or without sleeves, falling from the shoulders to the heels, with its folds hugged to the breast; all of one colour, green, deep crimson, or sickly yellow, and more rarely a white and red check plaid, such as we would use for a covering to a mattress or pillow-case. The care a Turkish woman must bestow on her drapery gives her enough to do as she waddles heavily and clumsily along. I have seen her coming down the steps into a steamer holding her skirts up to her garters, apparently heeding the display of her stockings, when she has any, much less than the chance of the yashmak slipping off her sacred nose.

Away from the shores of the Golden Horn, the bazaars, and the markets, the traffic in Stamboul is by no means considerable, and many of the upper quarters have a silent desolate look, suggesting the idea of a falling off in the population. It is not so in any of the streets of Pera or Galata, where the crush and the din are incessant. On both sides of the harbour, wherever the bustle is at its height, three features of this strange Eastern life are painfully striking—the multitude and importunity of loathsome beggars, the shouting and bawling of itinerant vendors, and the hideous torture of the hamals or street porters. Nowhere except at Genoa, where men in that condition bear the Eastern name of *Camalli,* is the human frame so dreadfully made to resemble a beast of burden as along these horrible thoroughfares. The *hamal* struggles and staggers on his way, bent double under his enormous load, his head on a level with his knees, black in the face, and with the veins starting on his neck and forehead. In a place where carriages are used, and where asses and mules are legion, it seems strange that men should make so little use of the truck or pack-saddle. Everything is carried on men's back, or depending on ropes between a pair of long poles resting on four men's stout shoulders. The beggars are of all races and religions; and Eastern notions, hallowing even the freaks of stark madness, sanction the exhibition of festering sores, stunted or crippled limbs, positively sickening even to a stranger accustomed to the most

repulsive exhibition of Roman and Neapolitan mendicancy. The beggars at Constantinople have a peculiarly insinuating way of appealing to the feelings of charitable persons. The dirty hands of a slovenly squaw, or of a stalwart and sturdy vagrant, will, when you least expect it, pat you affectionately and caressingly on the shoulder or back, and when you turn with surprise and anger, frowning on the loathsome object that thus claims your attention, you are met with a grin of satisfaction by the wretch, who, if he fails to move, enjoys at least the pleasure of knowing that he annoys you. Judging from appearances, the misery in the city of the Sultan must be as intense as it is all-pervading, and it can hardly be otherwise where the dervish, or monk, walks about so stout and sleek, and where mosques and imperial palaces outnumber the churches, convents, and princely mansions of what was once Papal Rome.

Another peculiarity of Constantinopolitan life are its omnipresent loose dogs; but there is so much to be said about them that I think I must reserve this part of the subject for another chapter.

To move among this unhappy Eastern crowd without wishing oneself deaf and blind seems to me hardly possible, or to catch any of the thousand glimpses of the lovely surrounding scenery without longing to rid the spot of the rascal-mob which is now in possession, and imagining what it would be in the hands of humanised beings. How long will it be

before the desire is fulfilled, before this ceases to be the city of the Sultan, or before the Sultan's government makes the first steps on the path of that improvement some feeble symptoms of which are already perceptible in the material aspect of the place, creeping in, not by Turkish exertions, but rather in despite of the hindrances thrown everywhere in the way by its improvident rulers?

I was curious, last Friday, to see the man on whom depends any impulse that may be given to the progress of this long-stagnant community, the man in whose hands, by the advice of the present Grand-Vizier, the government has assumed the forms of the most absolute, irresponsible personal sway. I went down the road to Top-haneh, and stood on the bank of the Bosphorus at Fondookli, waiting for his Imperial Majesty, Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz, who, from his palace of Dolmabacheh, was to be rowed to the mosque, close to the spot where I and a few privileged English—among whom Sir Arnold and Lady Kemball—were gathered. In the open space between us and the mosque, troops of all arms were drawn up; a considerable number of carriages with veiled ladies, and a crowd, by no means dense, were in attendance. It is a custom with the present Sultan not to divulge the spot where he intends to repair for his weekly devotions, till only a few hours, and sometimes a few minutes previous to his leaving the palace. The ministers and other high functionaries, the troops which are to be mustered along the line

of march, the band, the Sultan's barges, horses and carriages, and even carts laden with gravel to be strewn on the path to guard against its slipperiness, are all in readiness round the precincts of the palace, ready to set out in any direction that may be appointed at the eleventh hour, the lateness and suddenness of the Padishah's pleasure not unfrequently causing a great crush and helter-skelter before the suite can fall into the proper order of march. In the present instance the Sultan came to the mosque by water, and returned to the palace by land. At about half-past twelve, the appointed hour, some of the caïques of the retinue hove in sight, the distance between us and the palace hardly exceeding 300 yards. Presently the cannon from Top-haneh gave the signal that his Imperial Majesty was stepping into his barge, and the report was echoed by batteries on both sides of the Bosphorus. The barges then advanced, six of them—the last a mass of golden ornaments, lined with scarlet cloth, with a lofty canopy, and under it a sofa on which the Sultan sat in solitary greatness. The Sultan's barge and each of the others were rowed by a score of tall, stout, white-clad oarsmen, Albanians, I was told, picked out for this especial service. The great men of court and state landed in order of their rank, and formed in a procession, the Sultan being the last to alight. The band struck up a lively Oriental march; the muezzin sang out from the minaret gallery; the artillery again thundered as the Sultan's foot touched

terra firma, and a cheer *de rigueur* rose from the throats of the soldierly array, as the Sovereign and suite walked across the space before the mosque, and disappeared behind its portals.

Ten minutes elapsed; the notes of a faint canticle resounded from the open doors of the sacred edifice; and presently there was more cheering, more firing of cannon, a fresh burst of lively music, and it was understood that the Sultan had gone out of the mosque on the land side, had with his suite got into the court carriages, and taken a short drive back to the palace. We lost no time in getting into our own hackney-coach, and strove, but vainly, to force our way through the throng of Turkish equipages which stood in each other's way in the broad yet encumbered thoroughfare. We were too late for a sight of the Sultan, but indemnified ourselves for our disappointment by peeping close under the yashmaks of the beauties in the nearest equipages, regardless of the scowling looks and heavy horse-whips of the eunuchs, the fair Moslem ladies in their turn leaning out of their windows, staring at us with all their might, some of them quietly taking stock of our Christian lady's "last sweet thing from Paris," whilst others chattered away with rare fun at the shape of our chimney-pots, and wondered what we hid in the pockets of our coat-tails.

The Sultan looked aged, listless, and "bored;" considerably paler and flabbier than when I saw him in London, his blank expression hardly conveying

the idea of the wayward and wilful, impatient character attributed to him by those who approached him. Never addressed except with every show of servile adoration, knowing no other law, human or divine, than his will, this Sultan, *Padishah*, father of all sovereigns, this *Hunkiar* or Man-slayer, arbiter of life and death, Refuge of the World, and Shadow of God, was not much disposed by nature or fitted by education to comprehend or to brook the difficulties by which his throne was beset. Waited upon by ministers whom he browbeat, and mistrusted, and changed at every quarter of the moon; and from whom he expected not suggestion but submission, he was not easily to be told that his household expenditure, his ironclads, the scores of marble edifices, gardens, and pleasaunces with which he lined both shores of the Bosphorus, and the luxuries of the inmates there immured, contributed in no small degree to the disorder of his finance; he could not be made to understand that the high functionaries whom his caprice invested with so brief a tenure of office, or who obtained it by bribing the Sovereign's minions and the Sovereign himself, must needs limit their exertions to the long-established practice of "making hay while the sun shines," and that the administration, by passing from hand to hand with such frequent vicissitude, could not fail, were even those hands the ablest and cleanest, to fall into a depth of corruption and confusion sure to exhaust his resources, to crush the sinews of the public

prosperity, and to sap the foundation of his power by land and sea. Unwilling to listen to domestic advice Abd-ul-Aziz was only too apt to resent foreign dictation. Remonstrance was seldom allowed to reach his ears, and never welcome; and if at any time it gained forcible admission, it came through the organ of that Power which brooked no denial, and whose policy, questionable as to any good it may ever have boded to the Ottoman Empire, was now subservient to views at variance with its present interests, and eventually fatal to its future prospects. There was only one man, I was told, whose voice was ever heard in the Sultan's council, and it was he who, as he spoke, "never forgot that he had the strength of eighty millions of people to back him."

How it was that the representatives of all other European States suffered Russian influence so long and so irresistibly to sway the Sultan's will, is what I shall in time endeavour to explain. The upsetting of the balance of power, mutual rancours and jealousies, and also want of personal energy, courage, and character, combined to paralyse the action of Western policy and diplomacy, precisely at a juncture in which its compactness and unanimity, its firm and resolute attitude, would not have been more than sufficient to meet the exigencies of an extremely difficult and perilous situation. There is a strange, so to say, fatalistic prejudice in some minds respecting any sudden and extraordinary aberration of a con-

firmed character, any cessation of the immutable laws with which the very existence of an individual or state seems to be bound up, departure from which betokens approaching dissolution and death. A man who has been all his life a miser, becomes suddenly prodigal; another, constantly persecuted by fortune, comes into unexpected affluence and prosperity—such phenomena are held to be the forerunners of the end. In an analogous manner a pope, for the first time after eighteen centuries, "lives to see the years of Peter;" his infallibility is voted by an œcumenical council. The fulness of the time has come for a time-hallowed institution—when, lo! the Italians break in at Porta Pia; King Victor Emmanuel is lodged at the Quirinal, and the Sovereign Pontiff exchanges his throne for what he calls his Vatican prison!

Apply now the rule to our present subject. The Sultan doffs the turban of his predecessors. He calls in French tailors, English grooms, architects, and ship-builders. The world applauds. Islam is to be Europeanised; it has taken a new lease of life. The cities of the West, for the first time in history, receive the print of the Padishah's sacred foot: wonders will never cease! The Sick Man is healed; the decrepit empire is rejuvenised. Ay; but look at the result. Reform is but skin-deep. Improvement is found not to go one inch below the surface. Modern progress only brings in new luxuries; refinement merely promotes fresh extravagance. The

form of government is modified, but its old despotism is intensified. The Sick Man is worse than ever; the doctor is again called in, but with him also, this time, the lawyer, the priest, the undertaker.

CHAPTER III.

THE DOGS OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

THE DOGS.—THEIR BREED.—THEIR HABITS AND INSTINCTS.—THEIR POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION.—THE TURKS AS RULERS OF DOGS AND MEN.

THE Ottoman Empire has a sublime contempt for statistics. You can never get a Turk to tell you the number of his wives, of his sheep, or other valuables; and, being himself, with all he has, included among his lord the Sultan's chattels, he is content to remain and to leave the rest of the world in ignorance of everything connected with the extent, the population, the revenue, and above all things, the debt, of the community of which he is a unit. Where even the poll-tax is unavailing to tell you the men's heads, who would keep an account of the dogs, of those omnipresent, lawless, yet perfectly harmless dogs which are both no man's and every man's property? And yet when I walk along the Pera or Stamboul streets, and can hardly help treading upon them, lying as they do everywhere in my way, I am not quite sure that I do not deem them objects of as great an interest as many of the turbaned

bipeds who shrink from the unclean animal as they do from the Giaour. In the first place, it is to me a matter of doubt whether the dogs are not here indigenous to the soil; older inhabitants than either Byzantine, Frank, or Osmanli, all races which designate each other as "dogs," and none of which are as kindly disposed towards one another as they are to the dogs, or these to them. I am told that a drop of the jackal blood runs throughout all the breed of the canine population of Turkey; but whatever may be their remote origin, these animals are here, with few exceptions, no mongrels. In shape, in countenance, in language, in their bandy legs, pointed noses, prick-up ears, dirty yellow coats, and bushy tails, they might almost be mistaken for foxes, and hunted in the home counties or Gloucestershire. They exhibit less variety than is observable in the crowd of beings that here count as men. In the second place, although they live by charity, they never beg; they never send their females to market as the Turks do at Stamboul, nor offer them for sale, as, I am ashamed to say, some degraded Christians do, both night and day, in the streets of Pera. Perfectly inoffensive as they are while living, the dogs do not cumber the earth when dead; their cemeteries do not invade the abode of the living, nor are cypresses planted at their head to usurp the place which would be so much better filled by the olive or mulberry. What may become of their carcases I cannot tell, but although dead cats are an ordinary sight enough

in the Pera thoroughfares, I am convinced that it is here as useless to look for a dead dog as for a dead donkey in England.

And yet at certain hours of the day one would say that there are none but dead dogs to be met with in the place. These creatures lead, though a useful, yet a dissipated life; like the fashionable members of the civilised world, inverting the order of nature. They are up and doing from sunset to sunrise, and enjoy the refreshment of well-earned, profound sleep almost throughout the day. They are not only masterless and homeless, but have also a sovereign contempt for bed or shelter. There is a time, it would seem, when sleep comes upon them—all of them—like sudden death; when all squat down, coil themselves up, nose to tail, wherever they chance to be—on the footpath, in the carriage-way, in the gutter—and there lie in the sunshine, in the pelting rain, yellow bundles hardly distinguishable from the mud. They lie perversely in everybody's way, taxing the ingenuity of the passers-by, who have to pick their steps over them; and even when trodden by foot or threatened by hoof or wheel, they hardly rise from their lair, but instinctively crawl to right or left without awaking, without complaining, perfectly heedless of danger and indifferent to men's curses, which, they know, no blows follow.

For between them and the human family among whom, but not with whom, they live, if there is no love lost, there is also no war. The Constantinople

dog never learns to wag his tail; he seldom makes up, seldom looks up to a human being, hardly ever encourages or even notices men's advances. He is not exactly sullen, or cowed, or mistrustful; he is simply cold and distant, as an Englishman is said to be when not introduced. Like all men of Southern blood, the Turk, unless roused by passion, is not cruel or uncharitable. Your Mussulman never kills small birds, either to eke out his scanty larder, or to protect his orchard from depredations; and, in Asia, at least, he looks upon the stork which builds its nest on his hospitable roof, as the harbinger of Heaven's goodwill. Dogs and pigeons, though no inmates of his house, are under his protection and fostering care. Dogs that condescend to live by man's bounty need be in no fear of starvation where the Mussulman rules. They know that they are welcome to the offal supplied by butcher's' shops, to scraps from private houses, to waifs and strays from the vessels in harbour. On Fridays, as we learn from the handbooks, there are distributions of bread and dogs' meat throughout Islam, and a dole of dogs' bread and biscuit at the Bayezidyeh, or Bayazet's or Doves' Mosque. But your Turkish dog has an independent spirit. He prefers catering for himself; he prowls about all night; he picks up what he can get out of the garbage which is laid out at every street-door, and performs, as a scavenger, a service of far greater benefit to the community than of emolument to himself.

The dog's instinct, however, though dormant, is by no means dead in the heart of these Constantinopolitan canine rakes. Indifferent as they seem to all mankind, they single out with ready sympathy the hand of a benefactor, they linger with gratitude at the door of a house where they are known as pensioners. They do not disdain a friend, though they acknowledge no master. A snowstorm or any stress of weather will break the ice of their reserve. Maternal feelings, especially, will tame the proudest spirits, and alms for her progeny will be thankfully received by a young *ménagère*, who in her single state would have starved sooner than beg. It was in this interesting situation that the mother of three pups attached herself to an English young lady, on whose timely relief the forlorn being depended as she lay for weeks helpless in a hole she had burrowed among the graves of the Petit Champ des Morts. The love that sprang up between the giver and the receiver of the bounty was intense, yet I question whether any caress of the charitable fair hand could ever have overcome the dog's shyness; whether any amount of kind treatment could have coaxed the houseless vagrant within the door of her benefactress's hotel.

Free from the cravings of hunger after his frugal meal with Duke Humphrey, the Constantinople dog becomes a social being, and attends to the affairs of the commonwealth. At every street crossing, utterly deserted by men after nine or ten o'clock at

night, you find a dogs' council. Much as a visitor to Constantinople may have cause to lament his ignorance of Turkish, Arabic, and Romaic Greek, he ought to feel more put out by his inability to understand these dogs' Latin. Had I the rudiments of their language, could I acquire the means of communing with these demure and apparently unsympathising animals, who knows what interesting particulars I might learn respecting the laws and institutions of their canine Republic! Perfect gravity and solemnity, what one might describe as ominous silence, prevails sometimes for hours in their busy assemblies. Knowing glances, conventional signs, seem to suffice for their exchange of ideas. The occasional looking in or pairing off of honourable members adds importance or gives new zest to the dumb discussion. Under the leadership of some President, or on a motion from the Right or Left, the meeting is, now and then, adjourned; in comes, now a message, now a deputation from some Upper House, now a report from some Select Committee. But, again, all at once some unexplained commotion seems to rouse the violent passions of the hitherto so calm, so deliberate, and orderly Parliament. There ensues a general rush, a scamper down one street, up another, a sharp yell, a ringing chorus of yells. Is it a message of peace? a shout of defiance? a cry of distress? No man can tell; but there is immediate response. From street to street, from ward to ward, from hill

to hill, the alarm spreads with the swiftness of the Highland Cross of Fire. The uproar is as of myriads of unchained hell-hounds scouring the town, in the din of which dull, impassive man sleeps—as he best can. The savage bark, the dismal howl, swells and subsides like the ocean-tide. It is jarring discord in the immediate neighbourhood, heavenly music, as all sound is, when mellowed by distance. Sometimes, as at this very moment, nothing can be imagined more overawing than the stillness of the midnight air from my open window; nothing more deathlike than a vast abode of men when wrapt in universal sleep. It is that "audible silence," that appalling "voice of hushed-up life" which is all unlike the natural repose of forest, sea, or desert, and strikes us as a paralysis of our own sense of hearing. Suddenly across the deep, from the border of the vast cemetery at Scutari, or from the precincts of the Seven Towers at Stamboul, the far-away dogs' concert, faint and indistinct, is wafted to my ear; faint and vague and dream-like at first, yet multitudinous, as if the Spectre Huntsman were driving his demon pack in full cry, yap-yapping, from their kennel in the nether regions. That faint wave of sound waxes and heaves and fills the space as it rapidly advances, and in a few seconds the empty haunts of men become the scene of unappeasable wrath and strife.

To the uninitiated eye these dogs all look like brethren, issued from one common stock, living together in bonds of peace and unity; nomadic,

untied to any particular locality, wedded to the Saint Simonian theories about all the social *communautés*. But, with animals as with men, there is danger in any attempt to overstep the barriers of *meum* and *tuum*, and there are no more fierce and inveterate feuds than those between nearest kinsmen. The dogs of Constantinople do not constitute one State, or even, as far as one can understand, a federation of States, but are divided into many petty communities, as unfriendly to one another as were the mediæval Italian Municipalities, and they have probably been so ever since the time they came into the regions in the suite of the various wild Tartar hordes who first encamped here, always in as close a familiarity, yet as little domesticated, with every new tribe of invaders as they are now. The whole region of the Bosphorus, on both sides, is parcelled out into districts, with nicely-defined limits, among these canine tribes. Every dog of each family knows full well the length and width of his tether, and is aware that he can only venture beyond it at his peril. But, with dogs as with men, what consideration of right and wrong, what apprehension of severe punishment, can control the instinct of curiosity and love of adventure, take the relish from forbidden fruit or stolen interview, or blunt a desire to diversify home monotony by a spell of foreign intercourse? Woe to the vagrant whom hunger after alien dainties, or hankering after outside beauty, lures into his neighbour's territory!

No Guelphs and Ghibellines ever stood up with greater jealousy in defence of their respective landmarks; nowhere are trespassers more instantly fallen upon, or punished with more ruthless summary justice; nowhere is the injury, however well deserved, inflicted upon an individual taken up with greater *esprit de corps*, as a common cause, by a whole clan. By day the sudden, sharp, long-continued whine of agony of a luckless offender will occasionally appeal to the sympathies of his whole kindred, and a smart scuffle between his aggressors and his defenders will give rise to a few minutes' disturbance; but the throng of lumbering men is too much in the way of the combatants for the *mêlée* to become general, or to extend to a large neighbourhood. But at night the angry passions of the hostile factions are allowed full play. Fresh breaches of the peace are embraced as good opportunities for settling old scores. Every tribe takes the field either in its own or in its ally's quarrel. Every dog's fangs are against every dog; and the result may be seen in the morning in the crippled limbs, lopped off tails, torn ears, large old scars, sores, and new gashes with which every champion's hide is scored, and which, added to the traces of every variety of loathsome diseases, make so many of the race so ragged, mangy, and unwholesome as to sicken the most inveterate dog-fancier.

The Turks, as I said, are not unfriendly to these dogs, though they do not let them into their houses

any more than they suffer Christians to pollute with their presence the sanctity of their harems and mosques. There were rows and riots in Constantinople when a reforming Grand Vizier, yielding to European suggestion, ordered the loose dogs to be slaughtered, or transported to an island in the Sea of Marmora, and there poisoned. The Turks, as I said, would not let the poor animals starve, though they shrink from their contaminating contact; but they do not presume to govern them, preferring to leave to them the responsibility of their autonomy and the administration of their own municipal justice, on the same principle as they have bestowed the same boon on Roumans and Servians, and as they must before long equally grant it to the Bosnians, Herzegovinians, and Bulgarians. They do not ill use them, nor will they allow them to be worried by brutal strangers or plagued by thoughtless children; but they make no attempts to improve their condition or soften their manners, to civilise them, to win their ready affections, to utilise them in any of the thousand ways by which Providence seems to have intended the dog for man's trustiest friend and companion.

The impression that this estrangement from our race of that most sympathetic of living species makes upon a traveller on his first arrival is painful in the extreme. These dogs, as I have shown, are no man-haters; they are simply not on speaking terms with man. There was no smile of welcome for me from

the dogs when I landed at Galata; I have not made a friend among them since I settled at Pera; but neither, on the other hand, has any difference arisen between us. The dogs simply ignore my existence. I was told that at Stamboul it is dangerous in the night to venture among these dogs unprotected; that a lady's lap-dog, or strange dog of any breed, could not show himself there without being at once beset by a whole hostile pack and torn to pieces. But the pack I have seen round a sailor's noble Newfoundland inclines me to believe that even the dreaded Stamboul savages are more ready with their bark than with their bite; for when the Newfoundlander, weary of all the clamour at his heels, stood suddenly at bay, his Byzantine tormentors turned tail as curs invariably do all over the world. There is no doubt, also, that the unfriendliness with which an alien's intrusion is violently resented at first is not in the long-run an implacable feeling; for exceptions to the sameness of yellow or tan coats, pointed noses, and other marks distinctive of the shaggy, semi-jackal race occasionally occur—a proof that a smooth-coated stranger has now and then found favour with some member of the tribe, and come in either by *mésalliance* or adoption. More inveterate unfriendliness is shown by the dogs to the dancing bears which are here an ordinary sight; but, in reality, any strange, however commonplace object, any sudden, however familiar sound, is sufficient to create what the Romans would call a *lagnara*. One dog barks, and

a thousand dogs bark to ask what he is barking about.

If there were any good in vague speculations about the future, one would fain try to conjecture what is to become of this immense generation of dogs any day that fate should overtake the Osmanli and bring in another race to rule in his stead. Constantinople is the only corner in Europe in which an unowned and uncared-for dog is allowed to live. Will the reforms with which the Grand Vizier, Mahmood-Nedim Pasha, is now busy, extend to the canine family, or will the lawless condition of these vagrants continue unaffected, their dreadful serenades never allowing the Sultan himself peaceful slumbers even in the inmost bower of his genial Dolmabacheh? Poor Padishah, Zil-ullah, or Shadow of God! What sad but wholesome lesson could these yelling night-monitors teach him! What hope can he and his Grand Vizier entertain of satisfying the world about their ability to govern men, incompetent as they egregiously prove themselves to keep order among dogs? How can they think that the Great Powers will allow them to settle the quarrels of Bosnians, Bulgarians, Circassians, or Armenians, so long as their police is unavailing to tame the wildness of what God created to be the most docile of man's subjects? With what front could they deny province after province the inalienable right of self-government when they allow mere noisy brutes the enjoyment of the most unbridled, anarchic independence? How

can they undertake to levy taxes and administer the people's substance before they show that they have a better intelligence of their wants and a readier sympathy with their sufferings than they evince towards the unhappy dumb creatures which they equally refuse to feed or kill?] What chance is there of their hearing their subjects' complaints, or attending to the remonstrances of the Great Powers, if they are deaf to the protests which legions of maimed, torn, starving hounds are daily and nightly barking under their windows? "You, rulers of Empires!" the Herzegovinians may say; "first prove yourselves worthy of being keepers of kennels."

CHAPTER IV.

STAMBOUL BY DAY.

SIGHT-SEEING IN CONSTANTINOPLE.—MOSQUES.—MINOR MOSQUES.—BYZANTINE CHURCHES.—RUINS.—WALLS.—GATES.—THE INS AND OUTS OF STAMBOUL.

NOTWITHSTANDING the bad weather, the short days, and my natural indolence, I have not altogether neglected my duties as a civilised being, and have been about seeing some of the sights of Constantinople. A tourist who will follow Murray's guidance, may "do" the place in six days; but my stay here has already considerably exceeded that period, and half the task is as yet scarcely accomplished. The fact is, I am a perfect Goth of a traveller. I hate goloshes, and to have to take them off and put them on at the bidding of a dirty *cavass*, or still dirtier dervish, seems to me the height of indignity. Besides, I do not see things to enable myself to "say that I have seen them," and it frets me to be trooped about with a pack of unsympathising strangers, hurried from room to room at stated hours and days, and plagued out of my *nil admirari* composure by the lecture of a

prosy *valet de place*, or the raptures of an æsthetic professor.

The Turks also have made a journey from Pera to Stamboul a veritable *corvée;* and I never move about day or night, in fair weather or foul, without wondering what results can be expected from the projected reforms of a government and people who show so little disposition to "mend their ways," by removing some of the nuisances and discomforts attending any one who attempts locomotion along their thoroughfares. They make every bone in your skin ache if they drive you in their close hackney coaches, and you risk your neck if you ride one of their horses, many of whom, in spite of the excellence of their breed, are broken-down screws, and, even when sound, are self-willed brutes, equally ignoring your bridle, whip, or spur, and only obeying the shouts or the switch of the bare-legged ragamuffin of an *atjee*, or horse-driver, who scampers after you rather like a footpad than a footman. The consequence is that I have not crossed the bridge five or six times since I came to the place, and even then my anxiety to pick my way through the mud—that horrid mud which neither sun nor wind seems to dry—and my efforts to avoid collision with the well or ill-dressed, but generally ill-washed, and often ill-mannered, pushing and jostling crowd, have hardly allowed me a chance to look about me. Constantinople is the place in the world where a man, if he would be safe, must go about with his soul in his feet.

That I have seen mosques and kiosks, fountains and tombs, khans and bazaars, the Museum, the Sultan's treasure, and the Hall of Ancient Costumes, the reader must take for granted—for I did not come here to write a guide-book—and what interests me is not so much the place itself as the race that has governed it for above four centuries; not so much its arts and antiquities as the extent to which the monuments of another race and of a former age have been preserved or injured under the influence of rulers whom the fortune of arms placed in possession of the grandest and finest spot on earth, and who seem as yet so little inclined to quit it. There were, I am told, at the fall of Constantinople, in 1453, as many as 450 churches in the city and its suburbs. Of these only three were allowed by the conquerors to be used for Christian worship; the rest were either desecrated or turned into mosques. The Turks, as good Mohammedans, abhorred the worship of images; but, as a thrifty people, they did not wish to take the trouble of building so long as they had available edifices at their discretion. Up to this very day the old Byzantine Church of St. Sophia is the Ottoman Cathedral, and the Sultan, as in duty bound, proceeded to it in State the other day, on the recurrence of the Courban-Baïram, or feast of the lamb, as he is wont to do in all public solemnities. That church rises still, a mountain of masonry, in its primitive sublimity. Many of the alterations which make it an incongruous and somewhat clumsy mass

on the outside, are anterior to the date of the Ottoman Conquest; and, inside, the face of the Saviour and the faces of the angels and saints have been slightly scratched from the old Mosaics, so slightly in some instances as to leave the features still distinctly perceptible, so that by a little application of the restorer's skill, and by the removal of the huge scrolls bearing verses from the Koran, and of a few bits of carpet, horse-tails, ostrich eggs, and other plain Mohammedan ornaments and relics, mere trumpery and frippery, nothing would be easier than to replace the Cross where now the Crescent rises, and blot out every trace of the work of these last 423 years. The awe struck into the Osmanli's minds by the achievements of the race among whom they settled so strongly appealed to their pride and ambition as to prompt them to emulate what they could not help admiring, and for the best part of a century, while intercourse with the European nations—and especially with the Italians, then at the zenith of their artistic glory—was kept up, the Turks aspired to what may be considered an architecture of their own, and their endeavours culminated in that Mosque of Soliman the Magnificent, which, though not attaining the grandeur, greatly surpassed the harmony and elegance of St. Sophia, and is, indeed, to its Byzantine rival what St. Paul's of London is to St. Peter's in Rome. Turkish genius, however, seems to have exhausted itself in that first effort. Nothing that can at all come near to the glory of St. Sophia

and the Suleymanieh is to be seen in Ahmet's Mosque of the Six Minarets, or in any other of the hundreds of temples with which the successors of Mohammed II. have crowned the seven hills of Stamboul. Nothing original, nothing absolutely beautiful strikes the eye in those long rows of gay and fantastic imperial palaces and kiosks which line the Bosphorus. The attempts made here and there to reproduce the glories of the Alhambra of Granada and the Alcazar of Seville turn out deplorable failures. There is nothing like style to enhance the real value of the gold and costly marble with which those buildings are glittering, just as there is no workmanship in the setting of the inestimable jewels accumulated in the Sultan's treasure. That the solid and colossal Genoese Tower of Galata should so little have influenced the taste of the designers of the grotesque Seraskier's Tower is indeed a marvel, or that even what still remains of the "Palace of Belisarius" should not have supplied a design for some of the staring barracks and other public edifices which disfigure the open spaces in the capital, and the bare hills in its environs. If we except a few of the *Turbehs*, or sepulchral monuments, and of the fountains which exhibit some reminiscences of florid Arabic elegance, art seems altogether beyond the power of the Turk's creation or adoption.

Even his undoubted religious veneration fails to interest the Mussulman in the preservation of the buildings consecrated to his own worship. The

greatest mosques in Stamboul, not excepting St. Sophia, bear an aspect of dinginess which is as much the result of man's neglect as the work of time. This is not the country in which one may look for the well-washed marble floors, or the plashing fountains of the mosques in the Arabian Night's tales. The old worn-out stone or brick is, as a rule, covered with tawdry rags of carpet, and the noble simplicity of the walls and domes, which constitutes the real beauty of the great sacred edifices, is spoilt in minor buildings by such incredibly stupid daubs of birds, stars and crescents, flowers and vases, as to prove that the Mussulman's brush is still, and will probably for ever remain, a mere child's toy. A Greek but half-Anglicised antiquary of note, Dr. Paspati, by a special Firman, enabled me and a party of Englishmen to visit some of the transformed old Byzantine churches, into which "unbelieving dogs" are seldom admitted—little St. Sophia, the Church of the Pantocrator, that of Pammakarista, that of Chora, and others—structures, some of them, the date of which goes back to the period between the first and the last Constantine, and most of which, after the destructive work by which they were disfigured, have been suffered to sink into slow decay, without ever an attempt to repair the ravages of storms and earthquakes. Owing to the very multitude of sacred buildings which Islam usurped, the invader found neither the means of keeping them from ruin nor

the purpose to which they might be turned. In some of those minor mosques, as we entered, the only living being seemed to be the muezzin on the minaret calling to prayer a flock who never came. In some others, under the portico, outside, we were met by a gloomy and shaggy "saint"—*i.e.* religious lunatic, a ferocious-looking rascal who scowled at the intruders till tamed by the spell of backsheesh; while, again, on the threshold of other mosques we passed, on one side, the unconcerned, half-paralytic old dervish telling his beads, and opposite the inevitable, ubiquitous Constantinopolitan dog curled up into a dirty yellow bundle, insensible to heat or cold, wrapt in the sleep of the righteous.

I had read in guide-books that the noble Basilica of San Vitale, the glory of Ravenna, had been built by the Exarchs on the model of the Byzantine St. Sophia. By this, I now learnt, was meant, not the grand mosque of that name, but the minor church of St. Sergius and St. Bacchus, otherwise called Little St. Sophia. The lofty tribunes, supported by columns on which rests the central dome in octagonal form, and which has been imitated on a larger scale and with more sumptuous material in the Italian church, are blackened with age; the vault is seamed with fearful cracks; the ancient frescoes and mosaics, where they were not purposely effaced, are outraged by contrast with the quaint shapes and gaudy colours of the stupid Mussulman artist, unimpressed by the gloomy

solemnity, unsubdued by the quiet simplicity of the time-hallowed edifice.

In some instances, however, Oriental indolence seems to have got the better of religious fanaticism. Much of what is old remains, simply because no one would take the trouble to remove it. Ancient sarcophagi and baptismal fonts, hurled from their places, lie often unbroken in the churchyards, more than half-buried in the ground, or have been converted into washing-troughs. The fallen mosaics are picked up by the shabbier class of Ulemas, and sold for a few coppers, the demand of silly tourists conspiring with the zeal of the true believer to hasten the work of demolition. But the greatest wonder awaited us at the Church of the Monastery of Chora, near the Edirné or Adrianople gate, a perfect museum of mosaics and frescoes, which seems to have been spared during the many centuries since it was made into the Mosque of Kariëh Jamisi, and was almost so intact at the time of our visit that mass could have been said at its altars without impropriety. That the anthem *La-ill-Allah,* etc.—"There is but one God"—should so long have been chanted between walls and under cupolas peopled with so many St. Georges, St. Helenas, and other orthodox gods and goddesses, is a phenomenon which it seemed difficult to reconcile with Mohammedan intolerance; yet which it was not easy to attribute to reverence for works of art on the part of the Mussulmans, since the whole fabric had

been allowed to go so sadly to waste that at this very time workmen have begun to scrape, and plaster, and whitewash, after their ruthless notions of restoration. Strange to say, however, even in this wholesale work of destruction, two colossal fresco figures on either side of one of the inner doors, representing two of the Apostles or Evangelists, had, probably by virtue of their bigness, found favour with the destroyers, who had not only left them unhurt, but even protected them by wooden shutters revolving on hinges, with all the loving care which might be bestowed upon them in a museum of civilised Europe. For the rest, in their so-called museum, where relics of Greek and Roman times have been huddled together, the Turks allow dust and rust freely to accumulate. The palaces which go by the names of Belisarius or Justinian are little more than heaps of rubbish; nor is any attempt made to avert the fall of that castle of the Seven Towers which their own Mohammed II. restored, and which is now a dilapidated yet hardly a picturesque mass, only worth visiting on account of the view of a broad expanse of land and sea which may be enjoyed from the one tower still accessible by arduous, tumble-down steps.

I walked the other day from those Seven Towers all along the circuit of the walls on the land side as far as Eyoub, where is the tomb of the Mo hammedan warrior who fell at the first siege of the city by the Arabs, 785 years before the Turks took it, and where now the Sultans are inaugurated

by being girded with the sword of Osman. It is, I think, about a five or six miles' walk, and I went alone from gate to gate, outside the town, following the turnings of that triple wall and double row of towers, close to the edge of the moat, a specimen of castellated, mediæval architecture hardly to be matched even in Italy. Those lofty towers, square, round, hexagonal, octagonal, exhibiting every variety of shape and style, ivy-grown some of them, or weed-choked, massive, colossal, are now in an advanced stage of dilapidation; utterly dismantled here, cracked from end to end there, split, torn, battered, and shattered everywhere, a mere wreck of the giant achievement of a bygone age; and they would, as we learn from the guide-book, have been altogether pulled down by the present Sultan for the mere value of the material, which he had made over as a present to the Valideh, his mother, had it not been for the interference of the British ambassador, who, as he himself assured me, protested against that deed of Vandalism, in 1869.

What a scene it was! The road of circumvallation was lonely, and I toiled wearily over the sharp flints of the paved causeway—that cruel, murderous pavement, fit only for Turkish feet—having on my right the walls, on the other the ragged cypress forest which shades the endless Mussulman City of the Dead and its turbaned tomb-stones, death-like silence and solitude on both sides, except at the town gates, where long strings of camels, laden

mules, ox-carts, and pedestrians trudged sullenly on their way, the same sense of dull sameness, of decay and misery pervading all man and Nature's works, unrelieved even by the sky, which at this season was of a dun, leaden hue, unusual anywhere else in these latitudes. There was no one to be met; only here and there, in the deep mud along the roadside, there lay the sprawling carcases of the horses shot down here from the knackers' carts, each carcase a heap of torn flesh and blood; and on those mangled remains a whole pack of the dogs of Constantinople, roused from their torpor by the scent of that dainty prey, snarled and squabbled over the bare bones, while some shy or timid member of the tribe looked wistfully on at a distance at the banquet from which he was ostracised, and a gorged epicure waddled lazily away heavy with his too ample share of the feast.

More interest lies in the memories than in the monuments of Constantinople, for it is always easier to make a desert of a once-famed spot than to obliterate its historical associations. Under so learned a guide as Dr. Paspati, the city of Constantine lived before us a substratum of the mere brick and wood wilderness of the City of the Sultan. We were shown old houses at Galata bearing evidence of their having stood there ever since the time of the foundation of the Genoese colony in 1216. The quarters where Pisans, Venetians, and Amalfitans had their settlements were pointed out to us, and

also the very reaches in the Golden Horn whence the Crusaders of Baldwin and Dandolo attacked the city in 1204, the gate where the Turks effected their entrance 149 years later, the tower upon which the Conqueror's flag was hoisted, the other gate whence the last of the Palæologi went forth to meet his heroic death, and last not least the *blind* or walled-up gate through which, according to a well-established prophecy, the Osmanlis are one day to pass, when their days in the land shall be numbered, and the Cross shall drive the Crescent back across the Strait. With greater curiosity than that with which we viewed the Aqueduct of Valens, Constantine's cistern of the Thousand Columns, and the monuments of the Hippodrome—the Obelisk, the mutilated column of the Three Serpents, the Burnt Column, the Historical Column, etc.—we gazed on the planetree called "of the Janissaries," a venerable patriarch of the vegetable kingdom, rising in the middle of the open place before the old Sublime Porte—a tree under the shade of which Mohammed II. may have rested, and which has witnessed all the events following upon one another since his remote times, down to that massacre of Sultan Mahmoud's guards, which was thought to have released Turkey from an insolent and turbulent soldiery, but which, as it turns out, removed the only check that public opinion, through those unruly Prætorians, exercised over the arbitrary will of a despotic Sovereign, and thus tore up the

only rough-and-ready charter of Ottoman liberties.

Should we feel too ready to anathematise the Turks for the barbarism with which they either wilfully demolished or, from neglect, suffered the monuments of past ages to go to decay, we should, in justice to all parties, bear in mind that equal and even more wanton vandalism was evinced by the Latin warriors of 1204 who signalised their conquest of the city by the destruction of many masterpieces of ancient Greek statuary in which they saw nothing but relics of Pagan idolatry.

CHAPTER V.

STAMBOUL BY NIGHT.

AN IMPROMPTU RIDE.—A TUMBLE.—OUR ROUTE.—SILENCE AND SOLITUDE.—TWO DEAD CITIES.—MOONSHINE.—A NIGHT OF IT.

I HAD thus twice and three times been up and down about Stamboul, and in spite of its unrivalled site, I had come to the conclusion that it is one of those places one likes best the least one sees of it. I fancied if not darkness, at least "pale moonlight" would suit the town and its neighbourhood better than the garish blaze of day, but an excursion across the bridges between sunset and sunrise was hardly a thing to be thought of, for the Turks are an early-to-bed and early-to-rise people, and ill brook disturbance in those quarters which they reserve for their exclusive habitation. There are no social entertainments, public or private, in a country where woman is kept out of sight, till you believe her a myth; your polygamist Moslem goes to roost with the hens and rises with the cock, and his city is like that spell-bound world in which a child fancied "everything stood still in the night, even the rain." It was easy for me to renounce a pleasure which seemed to be beset with

difficulties, but chance brought me into contact with men of a more stirring and enterprising disposition, and it is thanks to them that I am now able to describe the impression a stranger receives from a view of Stamboul by night.

There had been rain on Monday last from morning to evening, and we sat after dinner in the dense smoke of the reading-room of Missirie's Hotel, when one of the company, a lively young artist, happened to look out of the window, and announced that the clouds had cleared off, and "the Bosphorus was all a sheet of moonlight."

"Moonlight!" was re-echoed: "Let us see it! Let us go out into it! Let us have a walk—nay, why not a ride by moonlight?"

It was done as soon as said; so easy it is to overcome obstacles when one looks them in the face. "A ride by moonlight! A ride to Stamboul!" A happy thought. Two or three clapped their hands; one stood up, then another, then a whole brigade. Every one was ready to go. The author of the scheme ran out; in half an hour he came back; the steeds were at the door. He had borrowed a cavass: he had thought of everything. We buttoned up our coats; we mounted: good hardy nags, I found, well-bred, unweary and spirited, were to be had for hire at all hours of the day, and till late at night, at every corner of the Sultan's city and its suburbs. Better cattle to choose from than what had been summoned for us from the stand at Galata Serai—or, at least, better suited to

our purpose—the very stables of Dolma-bacheh could hardly have provided. Their saddles were hard, their amble or jog-trot puzzling at first; but their canter was as easy as the motion of a grandmother's rocking-chair, and there is hardly an instance of any of these clever Arabs ever going down on their knees.

We were seven, and the leader of the company and I, knee to knee, went first, as the youngest and oldest; two rising artists, one an Englishman and the other a Dane, followed close at our horses' tails. Next to them two Germans, one a doctor and schoolmaster, the other a broad-shouldered baron, one of the glorious ubiquitous Uhlans of the Prussian campaign in France. A cavass of the British Consulate, Hadji Aali, a swarthy young Albanian, closed the rear, his trusty scimitar clattering lustily at his left heel.

Right before the door of our hotel, across the famous Grand Rue de Pera, there is a narrow side street—Rue Timoni, Rue Dervish, or some such name—through which we went down to the Petit Champ des Morts. We skirted this minor cemetery along the winding carriage-road, our ponies prancing and floundering deep in the mud, delighted with the splash which soon flew up, pelting their ears and noses, and making their coats as well as ours one mass of clinging wet clay.

Almost at the outset a little mishap befell us. The horse which Hadji Aali rode was a big, brave, ambitious creature, who had seen better days as a

Bey's charger in the wars, and resented the indignity of having to follow when he felt himself born to lead. At the first and second turning in the road he began plunging and rearing; at the third he fairly bolted, and, heedless of the strong curb, which almost shattered his jaws, he came down thundering upon us, his rider vainly tugging at the reins till he was black in the face, and muttering something between his teeth which, let us hope, Allah did not hear. In this mad career the cavass's right knee came into rather too strong a collision with the learned German's left thigh, making the good Dominie roar like a bull of Basan; whereupon the doctor's friend, the ex-Uhlan, dashed forth in pursuit of the helpless runaway, overtook him, laid hold of the unruly horse's rein, and, giving the man to understand that he was an old hand at the *manége*, and had yet to find the vicious brute he could not bring to his senses, he bade the Albanian alight and exchange seats with him.

To exchange seats in a sea of mud is as awkward a feat as "to swap horses as you ford a river." The cavass, vexed with his horse and ashamed of himself, bewildered also by the wild pranks of his still fretting charger, flung himself rather clumsily from his saddle, and, catching his foot against sabre and stirrup, fell flat on his face, rolling over and over, "looking," as the German observed, "such an object when he fetched himself up, with his fresh coating of dripping mud about him, as you could only compare to a sausage

dipped in butter-sauce." The ex-Uhlan himself proved to be no idle boaster. He vaulted into the empty saddle, bestrode the rebel steed with a Jove-like majesty, put him through his paces with a masterly hand, and seemed to cast so thorough a spell over the animal that, after a few curvets and plunges, he was as tame as a lamb, and fell into the ranks in front or rear of us, the bridle in the German's hand chafing him as little as a silken thread. The order of march was thus resumed, and presently, without any further accident, the cavalcade arrived at the Golden Horn, and paid toll at the bridge.

There are, as the reader knows, two wooden bridges across this harbour of Constantinople, without reckoning a third and a more solid and elegant structure which has long been ready for traffic, but which, as I said, owing to some of those hitches in which all things Turkish are apt to become entangled, is perhaps destined to rot on the spot before it be turned to any use. There is the Karakeui Bridge at the harbour entrance, and there is the old bridge about one mile further up towards the water-head. It was at this latter that we crossed, leaving the Pera-Galata suburb behind us, and entering Imperial Stamboul at the gate facing us. We went up at random, in zig-zag, through a mass of narrow streets, in single file, always at the top of our horses' speed, barely reining in as we stood before the Mosques of Mohammed II. and Sultan Selim, and threading at last the main thoroughfare—the Rue d' Adrianople — we

went out at Edirneh Capoussi, or Adrianople Gate. Hence, after halting for a few minutes to gaze at the village of Eyoob, and the Valley of the Sweet Waters of Europe, at the upper end of the Golden Horn, we turned to our left and cantered along the city walls, passed the city gates, the Cannon Gate or Top-Capou, where the Turks came in, the walled-up gate, where the Turks expect to go out, and thus on and on to the Golden Gate and the Ruined Mole, where we had a boundless view of the Sea of Marmora; and thence riding round the whole circuit of the Castle of the Seven Towers, we soon fell in with the broad track of the City tramway, followed its line to Bajazet's Mosque and the Seraskierat, past St. Sophia, the Sublime Porte, and the Valideh Mosque, till we came to and crossed the Karakeui Bridge, clambered up the Galata steps, and ended our journey in the Grand Rue de Pera, whence we had started.

It was half-past nine when we left, and we reached home at half-past two; a ride of five hours without any breathing time, except a few minutes at a shop in Galata for a cup of coffee on starting, and a somewhat longer stay for an oyster and pale ale supper at a Pera Restaurant after our arrival.

There was nothing along our progress that we had not again and again seen and wondered at in our rambles through the town and its neighbourhood. The novelty lay in the witching silence of those solemn late hours. Pera itself, so fussy and noisy

and shrill as it is in the day time, becomes comparatively hushed two or three hours after nightfall; and in spite of gas lights, glaring *cafés*, and hostelries, its main street was already nearly deserted as we turned our back upon it, and it gave absolutely no sign of life when we came back to it. But at every step we made in the outskirts of Galata, and on through the mean hovels and shops, wharves and warehouses, at the water's edge, every trace of out or indoor existence had vanished; no man's voice or even whisper broke the stillness of the air; and the tramp of our horses' hoofs on the wooden bridge sounded hollow and ominous, so ominous as to strike us dumb as we advanced, and tone down our buoyant spirits into something like harmony with that blank solitude. Within the walls of Stamboul, along those endless rows of jealously-closed windows, past the recesses of those securely-fastened house-doors, the universal quiet was still more appalling; for the town was not buried in deep darkness, as in ordinary nights, but bathed in that hoar moonlight and seen as distinctly as though basking in bright sunshine; and one wondered what gave the place that weird forsaken look; one wondered what had become of the motley people who only four or five hours before swarmed in those streets, lounged in those shops, hustled one another in those bazaars. Now and then, indeed, as our horses clattered on the flinty pavement, a nightcapped head or yashmaked face would darken the glass of a candle-lit casement,

but it was instantly withdrawn as soon as the head-gear of the hated or despised *shapkanus* hove in sight. Now and then, again, the portly figure of a belated Greek or Armenian Caffejee in some lurking corner would fill the space between the half-closed shutters of his empty shop; but long before midnight even these last symptoms of animation had died off, and nothing stirred. Here and there, as we neared the barracks or stumbled on a guardhouse, a sentry would suddenly emerge from the shade and make a grab at the bridle of the foremost horse, for we carried no lantern, and were, therefore, *en contravention;* but a word from our cavass made all things straight. The soldier fell back without further parley; and we suffered also no molestation from the weary old *bekjee*, or watchman whom we met in his rounds from time to time, but who, after scanning us, and satisfying himself at a glance as to who and what we were, did nothing but strike twice as fast, and thrice as loudly, his heavy, iron-hooped staff on the pavement—that staff by which he intimates to thieves and burglars that he is there, and that he expects them to have the common decency to keep out of his way. That night there was no "yangen-var," or alarm of fire, to enliven the still-life scene. Even the dissipated dogs of Constantinople, whose active existence only begins when human labours have a respite, prowled mutely in their dark corners, shunning that to them unwelcome glare, battening on their foul garbage, and hardly

starting up to signal our approach or to vent their unfriendly feelings in a long, lingering howl at the moon. Outside, round the walls, at the gates, and as far as eye could reach down the sweep of the broad country avenues, that same awful sense, that dread of our own loneliness, struck us as even more oppressive. Between those hŭge dismantled mediæval towers, that long triple line of tottering bulwarks enclosing half a million of oblivious souls on our left, and the zone of cypress forest shading myriads of glaring tombstones on our right, we should have been puzzled to decide on which side was the dead and on which side the living city. A faint light glimmered here and there at some of the open gates; but of gate-keeper or guard no trace was to be seen; for what lonely wayfarer or caravan, or, indeed, who else but a party of uneasy dogs of demented *Ferringees*, would at that hour be paddling in the mire in and out of Holy Stamboul, startling either the snug bodies that snoozed in peace under the Padishah's protection, or the happy spirits, each at rest on the lap of a Houri of Mohammed's Paradise?

For a man who wishes to convince himself that "things are not what they seem" commend me to a companionless moonlight stroll. What a cloak of silver those soft, soothing beams were to hide the ragged beggary of the Sultan's city! What glamour of blended and blurred loveliness that glittering tide threw on tawdry palaces, dingy hovels, squat,

clumsy mosques, shattered towers, and fire-ravaged rubbish-heaps! What idealisation of the Arabian Nights' tales were those ghostly minarets, those plashing fountains, those studding rows of turbaned sepulchral monuments! How one wished that we could have scurried along at a less spanking gallop, that our horses' hoofs had been shod with felt, that our progress could have been as noiseless as the flitting of sheeted phantoms, that our joyous fellow-scamperers had been more sober in their mirth, less obstreperous in their laugh, less gushing in their raptures; how happy each of us would have been had every one who preceded and every one who followed been out of sight and hearing! Now and then, indeed, we came to a halt in spite of ourselves, and tarried to take breath, to await those who lagged behind, to consult Hadji Aali as to the right or left turning. Once or twice we drew rein in sight of a mosque, on the esplanade before the Sublime Porte or the Seraskierat, to look round; and for a longer spell when we came in sight of the Sweet Water Valley at the Adrianople Gate, or of the Propontis at the Ruined Mole, close to the Seven Towers, when we stopped as if by common accord and stood still, our emotion too strong for utterance;—that Valley of the Sweet Waters, with the minarets of Eyoob's Mosque rising above a labyrinth of villas and gardens at our feet, and far away, the silver streak of its pure winding streamlet with the Sultan's Peacock Kiosk embosomed in

its leafless wood, riveting our gaze as we took in the homely rural scene, the range of bare, bleak, breezy hills compassing it all round like a frame; —that wide expanse of the Marmora waters, with the line of town and sea-wall trending away on our right, and the low European shore lying in deep slumber on our left, and before us in the distance the hazy cluster of the Prince's Islands, and the masses of Asiatic mountains, over-topped by the long snowy ridge of the Mysian Olympus.

But our impatience, our frenzy to get over the ground, soon got the better of our sense of the beautiful, and of our religion for the "Venerable Night." We stood still, I said, to breathe our panting steeds just one moment, and then with a view halloo, one galloped, another galloped, we galloped all seven. How we pelted on, slap-dash, hurry-skurry, neck or nothing, up hill, down hill, over rough pavements in town, across quagmires out of town, I can even now, as I write, hardly think over without shuddering. Our captain, the young artist, who rode backwards and forwards, twice over the ground, like a dog, all along the line, was teazing now one, now another of the party to run races with him. In one instance, on the tramway road, he was out of sight altogether, either the horse running away with him or he with the horse, and we began to feel some anxiety when we came up with him at a guard-house near the Seraskierat, his horse's rein tight in the grasp of the sentry, who, as our

friend told us, had rushed suddenly upon him with an "Oupp!" barring the rider's way with lowered bayonet, and holding him in captivity, heedless of all remonstrance or explanation, till tamed by the cavass's voice, when the good Moslem released his hold with some pious ejaculation about *Inshallah!* or *Mashallah!* which was altogether lost upon us.

On the whole, however, the run was a success, and we came home whole and hearty, without broken limb to man or horse, or any other harm than the snapping of the rein of one of the bridles; and as we sat at our oyster feast at the end of the sport, we looked back upon our feat in imagination as if it had been all a pleasant dream, some of us not feeling quite sure that we had not here and there nodded in the saddle, and only our aching limbs or smarting skin assuring us that we had not actually slept throughout the excursion.

CHAPTER VI.

DIPLOMACY IN TURKEY.

LIFE IN PERA.—OUT-DOOR LIFE.—IN-DOOR LIFE.—AMBASSADORS AT HOME.—PAST AND PRESENT AMBASSADORS.—AMBASSADORS AND CONSULS.—AMBASSADORS AND DRAGOMANS.

For the finest town mansion in Pera and the loveliest paradise on the Bosphorus, and even with a *Stationaire*, or despatch-boat, a *Mouche*, or steam-launch, a state-caïque and £10,000 or £12,000 as salary into the bargain, I would not be an Ambassador in Turkey. We have five of these exalted personages in this place, and all of them are amiable, estimable, hospitable gentlemen. I try to put myself in their place with all my powers of imagination, but warmly as I sympathise with them, I confess that I see reason rather to pity than to envy them. Not even the proud consciousness of helping to wield the destinies of Empires would reconcile me to the sights, sounds and smells of this execrable residence. Outside the lofty gates of her Palace-home, the daintiest Lady Ambassadress must needs find herself amid the horrors of the Grande Rue de Pera. I saw one of

them the other day picking her way from stone to stone as if she had been wading through the half-drained bed of the foulest sewer. She was preceded by her swarthy cavass, a formidable guard with thick moustaches almost half-way down to his belt, a Damascus scimitar dangling on his thigh, and in his hand a long, heavy horsewhip, to awe the multitude and clear the way before his mistress. But what could even that brave man do to protect the lady's silk-skirts unless he lifted her bodily out of the mire and carried her the shortest way to the place she came from? How could even an escort of a squadron of horse screen her from that jostling throng of horrid men and beasts, who cross and press upon each other with as helpless a struggle as if they were all walking blindfolded? Her Excellency was brought face to face with one of her sex, and of her own, or of a scarcely inferior rank, when a desperate attempt at conversation was made :—"Comment, Madame la Comtesse, vous sortez par le temps qu'il fait?" "Que voulez-vous, Miladi? il faut bien prendre de l'air." The words were hardly spoken when, with uncouth shouts of "Guarda, guarda!" a string of laden mules with huge panniers came tramping, splashing, ploughing their way through the crowd, and ladies, ladies'-maids, cavasses, Greek and Armenian priests, dervishes, street-porters, and beggars, all had to make, pell-mell, for the refuge of the nearest shop—a shop, as it chanced, where there were many simmering

brass pots on the fire, as in a patent kitchen, but in which, instead of pillau or couscousou, the greasy fezzes, or woollen skull-caps, of Mussulmans, Greeks, and Albanians were being boiled or stewed into brand-new scarlet purity. The poor ladies must breathe the outer air; carriages they have, and sedan-chairs; one or two of them ride; but, to say nothing of danger to life or limb, nothing can save them from such dead-locks as the swarming mass of unwashed beings in the Grande Rue is every moment brought to, nothing can drive from them, as they go shopping, the loathsome hands thrust into their coach-windows by the mendicants, who have them at their discretion, and know that they can extort by their contact the alms which are denied to their whining voice.

Indoors, however, the life of the wives and families of foreign representatives is not so much to be deplored. They dwell in large, warm, well-aired, sumptuously-furnished apartments, with servants of all colours, with boudoirs, billiard and smoking-rooms, and windows with views of the Bosphorus; the ladies have their books and music, their flowers—"light and sweetness"—their *Modes de Paris*, their afternoon tea and gossip; the men their Clubs and cards; and all, dinner and dancing parties, with ices and after-midnight suppers. Nothing could be easily imagined more quaintly entertaining than European society in a Levant Provincial city—and Pera, be it remembered, is only a suburb, only a Cranford or *Krähwinkel*

of a provincial place, as it has at night no intercourse with metropolitan Stamboul. We have here, besides the five Embassies, as many as twelve Legations, with Envoys-Extraordinary and Ministers-Plenipotentiary or Ministers-Resident at their head, without reckoning Roumanian, Servian, and other agents of tributary States, and annexed to many of them a legion of Councillors, first, second, and third Secretaries, *Attachés* or *Secrétaires Adjoints*, Oriental Secretaries, first, second, and third dragomen or interpreters, archivists, chaplains, physicians, with as many Consuls-General and Judges, Vice-Consuls, Assistant-Judges, etc., besides bankers, schoolmasters, postmasters, etc., the whole or most of them with wives and children, constituting a motley population of above 500 souls entitled to meet for social purposes on a footing of *quasi*-equality. I have lived before in non-Christian countries with Frank communities of the same description, and found them different from the international gatherings among which one mixes in the winter season in such gay, genial places as Nice, Monaco, or Rome—different in many respects, and especially in this—that in Mohammedan places the Frank community have some ostensible business; they are most of them permanent residents, and as such more intimately brought together and more hardened in their likes and dislikes. They find themselves, besides, isolated, connected by no social ties with the native race among whom they are housed, forming, as it were, a kind of oasis of Chris-

tian polish and luxury in the midst of a wilderness of uncivilised heathenism, and obeying the necessity for an intercourse based on solidarity of caste and mutual dependence.

In a European circle of this nature the social peculiarities of each nation are pretty equally represented; each people produces its original types, each family brings its special gifts to minister to the common enjoyment. I have known North African Regencies where Consuls-General and *Chargés d'Affaires* greeted each other by the names of the respective States they represented, styling themselves "England," "France," or "Austria," like the heroes in Shakespeare's plays, and where we used to call on "Denmark" in the morning, or arrange a picnic party with "Holland" in the afternoon. The charm of it was there, as it is here, that each house is pervaded by its own ethnical atmosphere, cherishes its own home habits, and shapes its mode of living according to its traditional instincts, the nationality being perceptible in the pictures on the walls and the nicknacks on the tables, as much as in the language and countenances of the inmates. Let any of the drawing-rooms be thrown open for a friendly reception, and all these idiosyncrasies are at once blended together in pretty confusion. We have on New Year's Eve all Europe in "Italy." After the Christmas trees in "Germany" and "England," the same or analogous festivities will be held in "Russia," "Greece," and other "old-style" keeping communities. Here

we shall have the best music; there we shall admire the most elegant costumes and toilettes; somewhere else the most lively or most improving conversation. And we know to which race we are to look for the most skilful dancers, in what *salons* we shall meet the most thorough whist players. Unless it be at a general Congress of Sovereigns, it is impossible to combine a more curious medley, a more pleasing variety, a more bewildering Babel of tongues, a more desperate conspiracy to murder what is emphatically called the "Diplomatic language." Moreover, as at Rome a stray Cardinal, so at Pera an occasional Pasha or two will drop in, his red fez and plum-coloured *Redingote* breaking the monotony of the black-beetle-like male evening costume, the dignity and gravity of his manners contrasting with the free and easy style of European address, and his emotions at the sight of bare shoulders, and faces flushed with waltzing, struggling to break through the reserve of his well-disciplined Oriental imperturbability.

Of these quaint and interesting reunions which are got up for the pleasurable entertainment of us minor mortals, the Magnates at the head of diplomatic establishments not unfrequently take their moderate share, and some of them know well how to smooth their brow, wreath their countenance in smiles, and glide from group to group with every semblance of a mind at ease, ready with a courteous repartée or a well-turned compliment for those they

particularly wish to distinguish. But that care weighs upon them, and that other objects besides amusement bring them into the crush of a ball-room is very evident, and it is difficult to resist a suspicion that they are, almost involuntarily, watching each other's movements when asunder and scanning each other's countenances when they shake hands and interchange their profound remarks on the weather. The undoubted fact is that the office of a Diplomatist of the first rank in Pera at the present moment is no light-hearted business. The condition of Turkey since the outbreak in some of its Provinces and the partial bankruptcy of its Treasury has become a puzzle to the most consummate Statesmen, and, despite the facility of communication afforded by the ciphered telegram and the incessant travelling of Queen's Messengers, the Ambassador is in a great measure left in the dark as to the wishes of a Minister—who probably little knows his own mind—and thrown back on his own resources, till he may somewhat stagger under the weight of his responsibilities. What course of action is open to a Diplomatist in Turkey, or to what extent may he be allowed to intrench himself behind a system of masterly inaction? What has been for many years a chronic disease, a lingering agony, has now become an acute and violent complaint. It is with respect to the absolute impossibility of avoiding a crisis at this juncture that the minds of our envoys are perplexed and their opinions divided; but whether

any of them think that there is or that there is not "a good deal of life left in the old dog yet," they are all in duty bound by the nature of their office to walk into the sick-room with a cheerful countenance, to foster hopes which they know to be delusive, and address the patient as if nothing were the matter, or make light of the indisposition as if it were something of a trifling and passing character, sure to yield to commonplace, gentle treatment.

These are no longer the times in which a young, gentle, and nervous Sultan Abdul Medjid used to be "literally ambassadored to death." The visits of foreign diplomatists to the Palace of Dolma-bacheh are now few and far between; they are arranged by a long beforehand notice, and announced in the papers as an event. The present Padishah is by no means intractable; not deficient in sense, or even, perhaps, in good intentions. But he is apt to refer foreign visitors to his business-men; to lay on his Ministers the responsibilities of a Government which, however, is nominally under his absolute sway. To go to the Porte with generally unpalatable advice is no pleasing task; to abstain from frequent visits to the Porte is to incur the charge of indolence or incapacity. One Ambassador is supposed to exercise so much influence as to be the actual lord and master at Constantinople; another is suspected of shrinking so carefully from all interference as to aggravate by his inaction the difficulties of the Power to which he is accredited, compromising at the same

time the interests and dignity of the Power which accredits him.

We live here in a region of keen observation and almost impertinent criticism. Much of the state and grandeur which hedged in the sacred person of an Elchi has vanished. Ambassadors have, in their good nature, in their facile communicativeness, unwittingly encouraged familiarity and tolerated discussion. On the evening after an interview at the Sultan's Palace an Envoy is waited upon at his own house and "interviewed" in his turn. Of course he is not to be thrown off his guard; he says what he likes to say or says nothing; but the most adroit among them make a display of great frankness and openness, and their outspoken manner is evidently so "taking" that it prescribes a similar conduct to their colleagues in spite of themselves; so that a direct and reserved diplomatist gets nothing for his pains but a patent for dulness, and is supposed to hold his tongue solely because he has nothing to say.

This Pera is a theatre with great actors playing for the entertainment of a small audience. The multitude who enjoy the Ambassadors' hospitality and presume to approve or censure their conduct are a prey to political division. We have "Turks" or Turkophiles, and "Anti-Turks," Miso-Turks or Turkophobes, here; partisans who think the Porte has everything to fear from Russia; partisans who seem sure the Porte has nothing to hope from England; partisans who blame an Ambassador for not pushing

beyond the limits of his personal or national ascendency; partisans who praise him for not compromising his own and his country's dignity by any attempt at mere blustering.

But it is not merely from the idle gossips of this motley European colony, or from the Levantine busybodies who swarm around it in a variety of dependent capacities, that an Ambassador has to apprehend factious opposition. There is often open hostility between him and some of his subordinate officials, especially those whose duty it is, under him, to protect his countrymen from any abuse of power they might otherwise endure at the hand of the Porte. It is the Ambassador's mission to keep the peace, to conciliate and make things smooth and pleasant; but it is the business of the Consul and Judge to stand up for right, and he has to bear the brunt of the war by which alone in too many instances right has to be asserted. That there should be great divergence in the views of two functionaries placed in such different and almost opposite circumstances is only too natural, and it almost inevitably follows that each of them should seek his own support among the divided public so as to render some little bickering and scandal with occasional passes at arms, matters of common occurrence. The Ambassador's negotiations are with Pashas high in power, men unmatched in the world for Oriental deference and obsequiousness, the most consummate gentlemen in their outward bearing, even if sometimes the

most arrant knaves in their underhand dealings. The Consul has to contend with rough, though not less roguish, subalterns, magistrates, policemen, customs and revenue officers, from whom even bare justice is not to be obtained without a vast amount of hectoring and bullying. No wonder two functionaries, looking at things from points of view so widely asunder, not unfrequently come to conflicting conclusions, and are apt to estimate each other's conduct with little favour. It ought to be the duty of the minor satellite to give in to the lofty luminary which is the centre of the whole system; but submission is hard for a man who is convinced against his will, and it is natural for one who has to obey under protest to stand up for the independence of his opinion and for his right to a last word in the argument.

With another and a greater difficulty, with which his previous official experience has never made him familiar, an Ambassador in the East has to contend. He is, to all intents and purposes, a dumb animal. At any other court than that of Stamboul, the least smattering of French fits him for a *tête-à-tête* with kings and king's wives, king's ministers and king's *maïtresses en titre;* the American Envoy being, as a rule, the only one who has not a Gallic word to throw at a dog, as he is the only one who can afford no gold lace to his coat. But at the Porte every European is equally destitute of the common organ of speech. The Sultan has no French, the Ambas-

sador no Turkish, and even in the rare instances in which there exists between them a means of intercommunication, etiquette imposes the presence, and enforces the assistance of interpreters. Although the Grand Vizier sometimes, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs generally, can express such ideas as they have in some of the European languages, an Ambassador never trusts their linguistic powers or his own, never attempts to transact business, never ventures to pay a visit, without the inseparable shadow of his dragoman. What diplomatic negotiations may be those in which the high contracting parties must always put up with the presence of witnesses, and depend on those witnesses for the interchange of their views and the correctness of their statements, it is very easy to imagine. The irksomeness of that translation and re-translation of every sentence, in a country where so much is usually spoken to so little purpose—the conversation being generally taken up by vapid phrases and unmeaning compliments, and in a language hitherto in a great measure unfit for the conveyance of abstract thoughts as Turkish is—soon, and after a few attempts, indisposes a European Envoy to any direct communion with the Ottoman Government; so that, while limiting his intercourse with them to mere visits of ceremony, he entrusts the management of his affairs to the dragoman, who thus becomes, in everything but the name, the real, virtual and actual ambassador.

Now as to what kind of state-servant, as a rule, a dragoman is, and to what extent his allegiance and devotion either to the person of the Ambassador or to the Power which he represents, may be depended upon, I can hardly venture to express an opinion. With the exception of Russia, Austria, and France, the interpreter's office is in every embassy or legation monopolised by Levantines. The "Oriental Secretary," which was for some time an indispensable member of the European staff of her Majesty's Embassy—the office being, in one instance, filled up by so distinguished a scholar and gentleman as the late Lord Strangford—has altogether disappeared within these last few years, preference being given to the more supple, more ingratiating, but certainly not equally intelligent, or well-educated, or high-principled and trustworthy native dragomans; upon these devolves all the head work, all the responsibility of the most delicate affairs, while the European Councillor of Embassy, the first, second, and third Secretaries, are paid as mere show and pageantry, and in reality reduced to the drudgery of copying clerks.

I shall not do the natives of the Levant the injustice of ascribing to them the character which they so readily and too unanimously give of themselves. Like many other Southern people the Levantines may, on a close acquaintance, be found to be better than their reputation; but that the stigma for more than Eastern cunning and duplicity, for absolute want

of principle, and impenetrability to shame, rests on their name, is a fact which they are themselves at all times too anxious to proclaim for any unprejudiced person to attempt to deny it. Orientals by birth, or sometimes by long residence, though of European extraction, these men contract the habits and exaggerate the faults of those Greeks, Armenians, and other indigenous races which they affect to mistrust and despise. Men of no particular nationality, constituting a caste, a tribe, a people of their own, bound together almost in one family by incessant intermarriage, they apply for protection and solicit employment, now of one, now of another European State, the office of Dragoman, of Consul, of Judge, of Chancellor, etc., frequently becoming with them an hereditary monopoly; the various members of the same family usually hoisting the flags of different Powers; or the same individual in some instances representing several Powers at the same time, or passing from the service of one Power into that of another.

Whatever opinion one may entertain of individuals, there can be no doubt as to the objectionable nature of a class of men who may thus be said to have no country, and whose moral worth, if they have any, has been from their birth put to the hardest test by their contact with a society, and a Government like that of Turkey, unequalled in its all-pervading venality and corruption.

That a man may be honest in the worst circumstances, that he may find it worth his while to be

loyal and faithful to a State while he is in its pay, one may willingly admit; but the worst is that his appointment to the service of that State is not necessarily permanent, even during his lifetime; he must always consider it precarious; he may aspire to better himself; he may be tempted by higher salary to seek a new master—as happened in the case of a dragoman of the Spanish Legation, who passed over to the British Embassy, to the great disgust of the Spanish Minister—or he may spontaneously doff, or be by some mischance stripped of the livery of all the European States, and sink to the condition of a mere Levantine of the Levant, an unprotected rayah subject to the law of what is, after all, his own country, the country to which he belongs by his family ties, and by a variety of domestic and social interests.

And it is to a man of this race—of a race liable to become baser and more corrupt at every new generation, that the most important and sacred international notes, protocols, and other documents must needs be imparted; it is by men of this temper that State secrets must be bandied about, which statesmen like Cavour or Bismarck would not confide to their under-secretaries, to their private-secretaries, or even to their colleagues in the Cabinet!

And it is on the faith of reports from these sources, despatches from Ambassadors depending for information on Levantine dragomans, or correspondences from Levantine Consuls, Vice-Consuls,

or Consular Agents, that Ministers of the Crown will stand up in their place in the English Parliament, and venture on statements that the assertions of disinterested persons, and even the evidence of stubborn facts contradict; it is on authority drawn from such materials that Blue Books are compiled and printed, and Honourable Members supplied with their ground for the discussion of the Eastern question!

Need we be surprised to hear that men of the Levant thus honoured with the confidence of Western Governments, have retired from business with the reputation of vast accumulated wealth; to hear of ex-dragomen possessing whole streets of house property in Pera, and of Consuls or Vice-Consuls, through their brothers and cousins, owning the largest share of the capital invested in the most extensive mercantile or financial speculations?

The State pays ten thousands of pounds to send a gentleman charged with its business to a foreign court; it little knows that its Envoy in the East is a mere cipher, that for all practicable purposes it is not the gentleman but the gentleman's gentleman—not the Ambassador but the dragoman—that is charged with the diplomatic relations between friendly states; the dragoman on whose arbitration depend the results of all negotiations, the issues of peace and war.

CHAPTER VII.

RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH POLICY.

DIPLOMATISTS AND JOURNALISTS.—GENERAL IGNATIEFF.—RUSSIAN VIEWS.—SIR HENRY ELLIOT.—THE ENGLISH AND THEIR AMBASSADOR.—ENGLISH POLICY AND DIPLOMACY.

Between diplomatists and journalists there can be no love lost. An Ambassador receives a newspaper correspondent with feelings akin to those of the laundress whose lodgings a charcoal-burner aspired to share. "Whatever my soap may bleach, your coal-dust is sure to blacken," said the woman; and whatever the Envoy is anxious to "keep snug," the reporter loves to bring into open daylight. I have never had much luck, never "got on well" with diplomatic agents, but I hope to make it clear to all impartial readers that the quarrels arising between me and any member of the *Corps Diplomatique* were none of my seeking.

On my first arrival at Constantinople, and within an hour of landing, I called upon the Russian Ambassador, General Ignatieff, for whom M. de Keudell, the German Minister, now Ambassador in Rome, had given me a letter of introduction.

In the course of the same day I saw Count Corti, the Italian Minister, for many years a personal friend of mine; and, on the morrow, I went out to Therapia, where, late in the year as it was, her Majesty's Ambassador, Sir Henry Elliot, still lingered. With these three I kept up an incessant intercourse till August, 1876, when the last-named gentleman intimated that "my visits to the Embassy should discontinue."

General Ignatieff is a perfect study of a Russian diplomate: a genial, versatile Protean spirit, never at a loss for an answer to any question, incapable, to all appearance, of reticence or reserve. He is an early riser, though up sometimes till a late hour, accessible to all persons almost at all hours, ready with a courteous, a witty or a benevolent word to anyone. He has a loud, ringing, merry laugh, contagious, which discomposes the Turks' gravity, and makes them chuckle, even though it be at their own expense. Nothing can equal his fresh memory, and the lucidity of his ideas, though at times he jumbles them together in his too rapid utterance, possibly when his object is to bewilder or mystify his interlocutor. He is a pupil of Bismarck's school—outspoken to every one who approaches him, and thinks that nothing deceives men so well as plain truth, because nothing better ministers to their incorrigible propensity to deceive themselves, and to believe, if not the contrary of what they are told, at least something quite different from it. It may have

been obtuseness on my part, but I can freely say that only in one or two instances I caught him tripping, and even then I am not sure whether the misstatement on his part was merely the result of inattention or of deliberate equivocation. He was described to me as "the very father of lies," and I received endless warnings against his Mephistophelian powers of fascination. Yet I could not even detect in him any attempt at dissembling. His hatred of Midhat Pasha, for instance, was always boldly proclaimed; and he was equally uncompromising in his denunciations of any scheme which could promise Turkey a prolongation of existence by social or political reforms. He hated the Turks and conspired to their destruction, no doubt, but never cloaked his designs under any hypocritical mask of a desire for their well-being, or hope of their improvement. "What inducement," he observes, "could he have to dissemble? He never forgot as he spoke that he had eighty millions of men at his back to make good whatever he said."

I shall never forget the views he gave me of the Eastern Question during the first interview I had with him. The question was to him "clear as daylight, and had always been so," even when grave statesmen stubbornly denied its existence, or felt confident that it was something in the clouds, something that could be indefinitely, eternally adjourned. Here is a city, he said, as he pointed at the vast view from his window, enthroned between two seas,

on two continents, intended by nature and appointed by man to be the seat of empire, of a vast, world-wide empire, as it was thought at the time of its foundation, when men's instincts tended to the establishment of universal monarchy. The Turks took it in the high tide of their career, when they compassed the earth with their ambition, and it is now supposed to be coveted by that Russian power which has overrun so large a part of Europe and Asia. That the Turks cannot long hold Constantinople, that they have no firm footing in Europe, are facts of which all men, and themselves first and foremost, are thoroughly convinced. The Turks came as an army, not as a nation; they conquered, ground, and crushed the subject races, but never governed them. Their sway was based on martial force, and it breaks down now wherever they find themselves in a minority. Their energies have been exhausted by sloth and gross self-indulgence; any attempt at reform of their administration, even in military matters, is, in the opinion of all sound-minded men, utterly hopeless. They could stand no shock from abroad, least of all such an onset as Russia might at any moment make upon them. Russia, however, M. Ignatieff asserted from the outset, and consistently maintained, meditated no such attack. From beginning to end he showed the utmost anxiety to demolish the argument which is and has always been raised against Russia with respect to her "traditional" ambition. It is not

true, he said, that the Czars at any time looked forward to the conquest and annexation of the European Provinces of Turkey or of her capital. The so-called "testament" of Peter the Great never had any existence except in the imagination of French or English quidnuncs. That testament, Ignatieff contended, is a pure myth; no man has ever seen it. Catherine II., he allowed, dreamt of a Grecian or Christian State, with its centre at Constantinople, which might be given as an appanage to one of the Russian Grand Dukes; but it was a vague, baseless fancy, never seriously acted upon till Nicholas, really uneasy for the peace of Europe and for the security of his Southern frontier, ventured upon those rash overtures which led to the Crimean War, but which really had at first no other object than that of concerting with the Western Powers the means of breaking the fall of the Ottoman Empire—a fall which, in the Emperor's judgment, could no longer be averted.

But, whatever might be the drift of Russian policy in former ages, Ignatieff and the Russians say, it is inconceivable that sound-minded politicians should take no account of altered circumstances, and should not see that, if the aggrandisement of their Empire at the expense of Turkey was ever contemplated by their rulers, such a scheme has now necessarily and irrevocably been abandoned. Turkey may have been to Russia what Cuba was to the United States of America. So long as the American

Union was a slave-holding community, Cuba, as the only slave market, would have been to the Washington Cabinet a priceless acquisition; but since the triumph of the cause of Abolitionism at the end of the Civil War, that island with its half million of slaves would be a burden and a cause of strife to the Americans, who now would never take it were it offered to them as a gift by Spain herself and with the world's consent. Upon the same ground, the Russians reason, the Government of St. Petersburg, whatever may have been its former views, whatever aspirations it may have cherished before instinct of nationality and love of local self-government spread even among the less advanced races, would now, for its own sake, shrink from the responsibility of subjecting to its sway twenty millions of subjects of various race, creed, and language, discordant on every subject except on the one of the antipathy which all of them—Roumans, Greeks, and Slavs—cherish and openly evince towards Russia. Were she bent on crossing the Danube and permanently holding the Balkan Peninsula, she would have to reckon on the enmity not only of the Ottomans, but also of those Principalities of Moldavia, Wallachia, Servia, and Montenegro, which, "out of pure Christian and humane zeal," she herself most powerfully contributed to withdraw from the unbearable Mussulman yoke; and she has work enough in hand in her endeavour to achieve the subjugation of wild hordes in Asia, without taking upon herself the govern-

ment of European tribes, bearing the brunt both of their hostility and of that of their many and powerful sympathisers. That Russia feels cramped and stifled in her inland position, and that she might wish for some better outlet than the Baltic, and for an access to the Mediterranean through the Bosphorus and the Hellespont, no man would deny, but she feels that the possession of Constantinople and the Straits would involve a necessity for a conquest of the whole of Rumelia and part of Anatolia, compelling her thus to swallow much more than she could digest.

Moreover, granting even that Russia might have both the wish and the power to occupy Constantinople, when she had achieved so great a conquest, what would she do with it? Would she find the organisation and administration of Provinces inhabited by half-civilised and yet corrupt, discordant, and seditious races as easy a task as their subjugation? Could Constantinople, and Pera, and Galata, and the Fanariotes, and the Slavs, and the Armenians, and the rest, be governed from St. Petersburg? Would not Russian colonisation become the necessary consequence of Russian occupation? Or can any sane man imagine that the Emperor Alexander would follow the example of Constantine, and transfer the seat of the Empire from the Neva to the Bosphorus? Can it be supposed that the Muscovite, who is now awakening to a proud sense of his nationality, would abandon the bracing climate, the hardy yet fertile soil of "Holy Russia," wherein

lies the compact strength of his colossal State, to expose himself to the enervating influence of Southern regions? Would he not answer in the words of Frederick Barbarossa, when the Romans tempted him to exchange the deep flowing Rhine for the creeping waters of the shallow Tiber? The Russian feels that his snow and ice are his proper element, and that Byzantium would offer to the Northern Eagle as unsafe a perch as it proved to the too grasping Roman bird.

On the other hand, could Constantinople be reduced to the condition of a provincial town? Or would it be practicable to give the Russian Empire two centres, and make experiments of that dualism which answered so indifferently at Rome, and which is as yet on its trial at Vienna.

Still, if Russia either does not covet Turkey or looks upon it as "sour grapes," what projects does she entertain with respect to the solution of the Eastern Question, and in what sense is she exercising the influence which she doubtless possesses over the Porte, and upon which her adversaries put so sinister a construction? The policy of Russia in Turkey, if we believe Ignatieff, is twofold. She endeavours to keep the Ottoman Empire together as long as it will hold, and she lays the basis of the new edifice which may at some future time rise on its ruins. In pursuit of the first object, she suggests to the Porte such broad measures of reform as may establish a *modus vivendi* suitable to the various races and

creeds subject to its sway. With a view to future contingencies she sanctions, if she does not encourage, the development of self-government in those Provinces which, like Roumania and Servia, are no longer amenable to Ottoman rule, and whose aspirations to independence can no longer be curbed. Were the period for the dissolution of the Turkish Empire, and for the expulsion of the Mussulman from Europe to arrive, Russia's scheme would be, in the opinion of the Russians, to establish a confederacy of States in the Balkan Peninsula, possibly also including the Asiatic Provinces on the Straits and the Propontis, which might have its centre on the Bosphorus, where Stamboul, Galata, and Scutari would be raised to the rank of a Free City, or perhaps of three Free Cities, the whole community being erected with the sanction and placed under the joint protection of all the European Powers.

Specious and plausible as this apology of Russian policy might sound, I never took upon myself to vouch for its sincerity or to judge of its practicability. Public opinion at the time was setting in strongly against the Russian Ambassador, and it required no little courage on the part of a neutral to acknowledge himself a frequent visitor at his residence, the alternative lying between being considered "Ignatieff's dupe," and being denounced as a "Russian hireling" or "Russian spy." Strange to say, however, the animosity against Russia was

at that early stage stronger among the Christians, at least among the European Christians, than among the Turks, for the Government of the Porte, forsaken by the Western Powers, was only bent on propitiating a formidable enemy which it could not resist, while the commercial world, whose interests were wound up with the thread of life of the Ottoman Empire, saw in Russian influence the demoniacal agency which encouraged it in its evil courses and urged it to its destruction. On this subject the contrast between the City of the Sultan and the Diplomatic suburb rising opposite to it across the Golden Horn was more apparent in the moral character of the inhabitants than even in the material aspect of the streets and buildings. Imperial Stamboul was almost wholly Oriental. The majority were Mussulmans, and the few Armenians and Greeks dwelling among them had caught something of that soothing resignation which imparts so much calmness and dignity to the votary of Islam. Your "true Believer" seldom thinks it his business to look forward to the future. He has an infallible Pontiff as well as an absolute Sovereign to rule his conduct and to guide his destiny. His life in this world is the Sultan's; in the next it is God's; and he pays his taxes and joins the ranks of the army with that heroic submission with which Viziers and Pashas of old met their fate, and sipped the "cup of coffee" handed to them by the Padishah's order, bowing their heads, and repeating their sublime

"*Allah akhbar!*" (God is great), from the first symptom of the working of the narcotic poison till they fell asleep to wake again in the Prophet's bosom.

It is otherwise with the Frank of Pera and Galata. On the first settling of the bustling Genoese on the skirts of this hill, the spot became the refuge of the persecuted native Christian; it monopolised in a great measure the trade of the Ottoman capital; it became a State within the State, with laws and a jurisdiction of its own, and displayed the peculiarities of that curious, crafty, supremely mendacious Levantine nature which grafted every variety of South European vice on the old stock of the indigenous Byzantine. The incessant fluctuations of commercial interests and the gossipping circulation of political intelligence keep the mind of the Perote Frank in a perpetual fidget. Coming events are here everlastingly casting their shadows before. The subtlety of Greek inventiveness supplies the theme for endless speculation. Sanguine anticipations and ominous bodings alternate from morning to night, and people are distressing themselves about many things, with that ingenious restlessness which a famous distich in four words, attributed to the dwellers on the same spot in olden times:

> "Conturbabantur Constantinopolitani
> Innumerabilibus solicitudinibus."

The subject which most persistently haunted the Levantine's mind at this moment, and on which he was apt to wax most eloquent, was the boundless

extent of the power of Russia, and her settled determination to use it to bring about the dissolution and extinction of the Ottoman Empire. In the condition to which the downfall of French predominance has reduced the discordant European States, the long-cherished project of Russia, these people thought, could easily be accomplished at once and by main force. But even now, they said, it better suited the policy of that wily Government to temporise; and for many years its agents had so adroitly hoodwinked, bribed, and otherwise won over the advisers of the Porte as to exercise an irresistible sway over its Councils, to the total exclusion of all other extraneous influence. That the Russian Ambassador was the *de facto* Sovereign of Turkey was with these Levantines an article of faith. They gave the Grand-Vizier Mahmood Nedim Pasha the nickname of Mahmoodoff, and by that same Muscovite termination of the names they equally designated all other Turkish Statesmen who, in their opinion were mere passive instruments in Russian hands. The only ex-Grand Vizier who enjoyed the reputation of being anti-Russian was Midhat Pasha, and it is remarkable that in the address by which this ex-Minister of Justice explained to the Sultan the motives which determined his resignation—a document which was then circulating in manuscript—Midhat ascribed all the disorders of the Empire "aux tendences pernicieuses, et aux insinuations de l'étranger qui ne cesse de faire miroiter aux yeux des sujets chrétiens sa

protection et son appui," contrasting the influence exercised by this Power with "le peu de sympathie et de confiance que nous inspirons à la Puissance qui avait été l'alliée la plussincère et la plus ancienne de l'Empire." In those few words, which I quote literally, you have the beginning and end of the fixed idea prevailing then throughout Pera and Galata, and it amounts to this, that Russia was, by her Machiavellian policy, slowly and surely compassing the ruin of Turkey, while England, acting upon her conviction of the incurable nature of the evils of this Eastern Empire, was calmly and coldly abandoning her to her fate.

It was under the impression of these complaints that I usually repaired to Sir Henry Elliot. I had had the honour of his Excellency's acquaintance when he was her Majesty's Minister to King Ferdinand in Naples, and later in Turin, when he succeeded Sir James Hudson in the same capacity at the court of King Victor Emmanuel, and I was received by him and his family, both at Therapia and Pera, with every mark of courtesy and hospitality. There was nothing repellent in the Ambassador's frigid address and unconquerable shyness, for one felt that it was mere nature, and implied no personal antipathy to oneself, but was equally extended to all who approached him, and might in many instances be attributed to the severe headaches to which he was frequently a martyr. Sir Henry was rather a listener than a talker; he had

the unfortunate trick of looking away from his interlocutor, sat bending down to the chimney-grate, whether fire was burning in it or not, and had generally a wearied, dull look in the rare moments in which he lifted his head and turned his face to the light. He was too well-bred to show impatience or fatigue, but somehow one could not help feeling that a visit was to him a visitation, and talk an infliction; he looked as if perpetually pressed for time and crushed by incessant work; politics, at least Turkish politics, was to him a distasteful subject, and if he at all brightened up and unbent, it was only when the conversation turned upon different topics, and especially on Italy, a country towards which he entertained warm friendly feelings, and on which therefore the sympathy between us was unlimited. I observed, also, that the constraint under which he appeared to labour in a *tête-à-tête*, vanished when company was present, and especially when he discharged his duties as a host at the head of his table.

I went to him full of complaints, which all the Christians, and especially the English colony, dinned into my ears. They held him, Sir Henry, answerable, I said, for all the evils of Turkey; they contended that it was only his remissness, only the peculiar mildness and non-combativeness of his disposition which kept him aloof from the divan, seldom let his voice be heard, and allowed his Russian colleague to rule supreme above the Sultan, to exercise his sway through a Grand-Vizier of his own appoint-

ment, boasting at the same time that the accord between himself and the diplomatic body of which he was the *doyen*, and especially with the Envoy of Great Britain, was perfect; or, in other words, that all the Powers, and especially England, were simply satellites in Russia's orbit.

And it is perfectly true that these charges against Sir Henry, as they were what I heard on my coming to Constantinople, so they continued to be repeated to me throughout the first half-year of my stay, from morning to evening. Nothing was more general, nothing more deeply-rooted than this conviction that England would have it in her power to propose and enforce the remedy of all the disorders of Turkey, were only her authority supported by an Ambassador inheriting the temper of the Great Elchi, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, were Sir Henry superseded by Mr. Layard, by Lord Odo Russell, Lord Napier, Lord Dufferin, or by any other man belonging or not to the diplomatic service, who might be fitted by sheer strength of character to break through the wiles and snares of the ever-plotting Muscovite.

I answered these malcontents, and I repeated to Sir Henry, with a view to soothe his wounded feelings, that those who censured his conduct should, before they condemned an Ambassador, ask what were the instructions which he was bound to obey. I suggested that, possibly, the Cabinet of St. James had set upon its diplomatic representative the same task which was imposed upon M. de Bourgoing by

the Government of the French Republic, which was "*de s'effacer,*" or to show himself as little as he could manage. Indeed, at that time, all the Powers except Russia and England, and perhaps Italy, had chosen their Envoys to Constantinople among the most effete and helpless men their Foreign Offices could muster: Count Bourgoing was an old Ultramontane, whose sphere of action should have been rather the Vatican than the Palace at Dolmabacheh; Baron Werther, the German, a veteran whose fate it had been to be accredited to Courts upon which ruin was impending—that of the Bourbon at Naples, in 1860, and that of the Bonaparte, at Paris, in 1870—was appointed by Bismarck to Constantinople, with the understanding that he should have no political initiative, but should in any emergency follow the lead of his Russian colleague; and the Austrian Count Zichy, a *Grand Seigneur,* who from sheer weariness of life at his Chateau, had applied for and obtained a diplomatic appointment from Andrassy as something due to one of his rank and wealth, was satisfied with such popularity as his sumptuous dinners and joyous balls won him, and merely worked at one end of the telegraphic wire of which his chief held the other end, limiting his part to the conveyance of messages, which, in the great perplexity and division prevailing in the Austro-Hungarian Cabinet were often sufficiently indefinite and puzzling.

The game was thus between the Russian and the English envoy, and this latter was modest enough to

feel with all other men, and almost to acknowledge that he was *haud viribus congressus æquis*, though he seemed to think that the means by which his adversary accomplished his ends were not those of a fair and honest combatant; that Ignatieff stooped to intrigues unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, and that he "lied black and blue," lied rather more boldly and recklessly than an Ambassador should be justified in doing even for the good of his country. Sir Henry Elliot had not the inclination, and he had not the power, to foil General Ignatieff with his own weapons. The Government of St. Petersburg, it was asserted, allowed its envoy a sum of £30,000 a-year, which, as the General disposed of considerable wealth of his own or of his wife's, could only be employed in the furtherance of the intrigues, the agents for which were supposed to be besetting the doors of the Russian Embassy and Consulate night and day. That Ignatieff conspired, that every Russian conspired, is a matter about which no man could entertain the least doubt, and, to satisfy us on that score, it was hardly necessary that M. Giacometti should publish his pamphlet "*Les Responsabilités*," containing the secret correspondence between the Russian Cabinet and its diplomatic and consular agents, and the members of those Panslavic Committees which, whatever might be their ultimate object, worked for the present, and to all appearance, in Russia's interest.

No doubt Russia conspired, and was compassing Turkey's ruin. General Ignatieff never made a

mystery about it. With a frankness amounting to cynicism, while he pointed out the short-comings in the administration of Turkey, and echoed the complaints of her subjects, while he dwelt on the difficulties and hinted at the dangers that beset her, and blandly and benevolently suggested "Reform," no one was, or expressed himself more intimately convinced than he was, not only that Reform with the Turks was out of the question, but that every attempt at it would only aggravate disorder, and make confusion worse confounded. He spoke like a man who looks at a drowning wretch, and bids him strike out and swim, knowing all the time that he cannot keep afloat, and must needs sink deeper and deeper at every stroke.

Whatever might be the ultimate and secret aim of Russia's policy, there is no doubt that her avowed and immediate programme was the championship of the Christian cause in the East. It was quite right that England should thwart Russia's hidden design and unmask her hypocrisy; but it was not wise on the part of her Majesty's Government, or of their Diplomatic Agent, to seem indiscriminately and in all cases to side with the Turk in his contest with his Christian subjects. "Every one here will tell you that I am a Turk," said Sir Henry to me the first time I saw him at Therapia, and I could hardly make out whether he intended to repel the charges or whether he gloried in it. But the fact is that his policy, as well as that of the Government he repre-

sented, tended to consider every Ottoman subject rising against the authority of the Porte as a public enemy, an accomplice and a tool of Russian ambition, and a disturber of European tranquillity. The English Government forgot that the Crimean war was undertaken on behalf of the Christian as well as of the Mussulman subjects of the Porte; that the peace of Paris, at the same time that it maintained the authority of the Sultan, was also intended to guarantee the well-being of his people. The English Government affected to be satisfied that both conditions had been fulfilled. They chose to believe that the Christians in Turkey were well treated and had no just cause for complaint. Disaffection among them, they asserted, was fostered by foreign *i.e.* by Russian, intrigue; revolt was stirred up by Panslavic, *i.e.* by Muscovite, emissaries. Whoever was not for Turkey was against England. In any quarrel between Turk and Christian, England took part with the Turk; for her duty, as she thought, in all events was to take part against Russia. Thus in one of my first interviews with Sir Henry Elliot, in which he wished to impress upon me the fact that his influence over the Sublime Porte was not so insignificant as it was described, he told me that at the time of the Cretan insurrection of 1867, it was to him, and to him alone, that was due the merit of advising the Sultan's Government to send an ultimatum to the King of the Hellenes, intimating that any further aid sent by Greece to the insurgents

would be considered a *casus belli.* King George took the hint; aid from Greece ceased to be sent to the island, and the insurrection, abandoned to its own resources, soon collapsed. That may have been an expedient, but it was hardly a generous policy. But however well suited it might be to the English ideas of ten years ago, Sir Henry Elliot was perhaps too confident that it might and should be applied in all analogous cases. Sir Henry deemed it his duty to support the Turks through thick and thin in every imaginable emergency. He made no allowance for the changeable disposition of men's minds; he continued to the last blind to the signs of the times. But shall we have reason to wonder that he, away from England, living a comparatively secluded life, and frequently out of health, should go wrong in his estimate of his countrymen's wishes, when we find the men at the head of her Majesty's Government equally incapable of interpreting the public mind, unwilling to break with exploded traditions, and persisting in an infatuation which very nearly committed them to hostilities in a cause which was neither that of Christianity, nor of civilisation, nor of England?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE SITUATION OF THE EMPIRE.—GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION.—THE GRAND VIZIER.—MIDHAT PASHA.—HUSSEIN AVNI.—GLIMPSES OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS.—THE TURKS JUDGED BY A TURK.—SAID PASHA, THE WOOLWICH BOY.

THE main difficulties against which Turkey had to contend in the autumn of 1875 were three; the insurrection in her north-western provinces, the embarrassment of her finances, and division in her Council.

The Ottoman Cabinet, of which the Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, was the head, had sustained a serious loss in Midhat Pasha's retirement from office. The reforms which the Grand Vizier proposed to introduce into the judicial and financial administration of the country seemed to his Minister of Justice, Midhat, inadequate to the exigencies of the time; and the scheme of a *bonâ-fide* representative Government, which Midhat presented as a counter programme, appeared to the Chief of the Cabinet fraught with danger to the monarchy. The breach between the two ministers proved incurable; it became necessary for one of

them to withdraw, and Midhat Pasha took the unprecedented step of laying both his resignation and the reasons which led to it before the Sultan, who naturally gave sentence against him. The intelligence that two of Midhat's colleagues had also renounced their portfolios was not confirmed, a proof either that the reforms of the Minister of Justice seemed too rash and impracticable to the whole Council, or that its members were convinced that the Grand Vizier was of all the Sultan's advisers the most intimately acquainted with his Sovereign's wishes. There seems, indeed, to be little doubt that Mahmoud Pasha, who maintained his influence over Abd-ul-Aziz's mind by urging him to the exercise of unbounded personal authority, represented all reforms tending to give the people any important share in the management of their affairs as an attempt to limit, and eventually to undermine, that authority. All men of progress, people murmured, give way before the incorrigibly despotic instincts of the head of the State. Essad Pasha had just died at Smyrna; Midhat and Mehemed Rushdi, called "the Translator,"—to distinguish him from Mehemed Rushdi Sirvanizade, who had died four months before—were not listened to, and any prospect of material improvement in the Government seemed so hopeless that some bold spirits might be heard loudly proclaiming the futility of any reform not beginning with "the deposition of the Sultan."

There was, however, also no lack of men of a less gloomy disposition, a party I know not whether it should be called "Old" or "Young Turkey," who fretted at the bare mention of an "Eastern Question," and who asked when there would be an end of the idle rumours about foreign intervention. "Why," they said, "should not the Porte be competent to grapple with its own difficulties? What need is there of the suggestions and schemes of foreign advisers?" Turkey, in their opinion, had got its "Great National Charter." The Hatt-i-Humayoun of 1856 was designed "to place the Christian population of the Empire on a footing of perfect equality with its Mohammedan subjects." All that was required was "a faithful interpretation and application of the principles established twenty years since," and the present Government were contemplating reforms which would satisfy "all legitimate aspirations of the Christians."

The truth, perhaps, lay between the gloomy bodings of the pessimists, and the sanguine anticipations of the optimists. Meanwhile, had Turkey really been inclined to *far da se,* she would in all probability not have been disturbed in the enjoyment of her expected millennium. Had she got the better of internal disorders, she would have been thoroughly safe from extraneous aggression. Look at the Eastern Question from any point of view it may present, and it would be manifest that no one could have an interest in raising or discussing it except that Power which

had everything to gain by adjourning it. The matter lay entirely between Turkey and her subjects. The Mussulman came into the country as a ruthless, fanatical invader; he established his sway by massacre and spoliation; he laid the basis of his dominion on brute force. But the time came when his strength was no longer irresistible, when the aspirations of his subjects became irrepressible. By a series of domestic insurrections, aided by foreign complications, some of his provinces attained either an absolute or an almost entire independence; and these by the success of their efforts became a focus of discontent to the districts still subject to the direct rule of the Porte, encouraging their hopes by their example, and countenancing their attempts by their sympathy. Insurrection in Turkey became a chronic complaint; it rendered every scheme of reform, had any ever been seriously contemplated, utterly impracticable. Every boon or concession to one race was resented as an encroachment on the rights of another; the breach between the antagonistic creeds widened with every attempt to heal it, and matters had now come to this, that Turkey, far from being able to "grapple with her own difficulties," could only, if at all, be saved from internal dissolution by extraneous influence.

The population of the Turkish Empire in Europe, Asia, and Africa was vaguely supposed—for even an approach to correct statistics was out of the question—to amount to 36,000,000, little more than 27,000,000

being under the direct sovereignty of the Porte. That of the European Provinces consisted of 15,000,000, of whom between 5,000,000 and 6,000,000 belonged to the so-called vassal States of Roumania and Servia. Besides these, who were all Christians, there were in the provinces immediately subjected to the Porte—Bosnia, Bulgaria, etc.—about 4,000,000 of the same denomination against only 2,500,000, or perhaps 3,000,000 Mussulmans. These Christians, although divided into a variety of races and sects, had one common bond of union in their hatred of the Turk, in their longing to oust him from Europe, and in their vague hope to constitute among themselves a Confederate State or a Federation of States, capable of taking rank among the independent European nations. Add to this that a large proportion, about 3,400,000, were Slavs, and these—such of them, at least, as were not Mussulmans—besides the mutual support they yielded to each other in their own territory, relied on the sympathies of the Slavs, especially of the Southern Slavs of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, that is, about 4,500,000 Dalmatians, Croatians, etc., who dreamt of a South Slavish combination to be made out of the fragments both of the Ottoman and of the Hapsburg Monarchy. Had even Turkey been left to her own devices, left to settle her quarrel with her subjects, had not foreign, say Russian and Austrian, influence been at work to aid the impulse of both the Government and people of her tributary Principalities, and of the Volunteers from

the Austrian Slav Provinces, it is not easy to believe that her unaided forces would have been equal to the task of crushing the insurrection in Herzegovina, or of preventing its spread to the hitherto undisturbed adjoining districts, and the general outbreak of an internal feud between the antagonistic creeds and races.

The Government of the Porte felt this, and in its desperate struggle for existence it clung for support to that Power which was supposed to have the most dangerous designs against the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. It clung to Russia, and obeyed passively and almost entirely the influence of the Russian Ambassador, General Ignatieff, a man powerful by the strength of his character, by his consummate adroitness, and also "by the 80,000,000 of people prepared," to repeat his favourite expression, "to back him." Whatever may be the ultimate views of the descendants of Peter and Catherine, it was evident that the Court of St. Petersburg had no interest in hastening the catastrophe by which Turkey was threatened, both because it dreaded the joint opposition of all the Powers interested in the free navigation of the Danube and of the Mediterranean—*i.e.*, of all Europe—and also because it saw that the ambition of the Christians of Turkey, both of the Slavs and the Greeks, to which it gave the first impulse, was now turning against itself—the discontented subjects of the Porte being perfectly willing to accept as much aid from Russia as might answer their own purposes,

but by no means inclined to exchange a Turkish for a Russian yoke. The fear of Russian absorption was acting so powerfully on the Christian subjects of the Porte that the Fanariotes, or Greeks of Constantinople, were now said to be more Turks than the Turks themselves—the only Turks who were truly patriotic, for the true Asian, or Osmanli, was passing away, and the Fanariote Greek was aiming at the re-establishment of that ascendency which he exercised in the Ottoman Empire before the Hellenic revolution. Russia did not yet see her way clear to the fulfilment of her "manifest destinies," and people thought that her influence was exercised by the suggestion to the Porte of such measures as must needs add to the confusion in its administration, exasperate against it the hostile passions of its subjects, and deepen among these the animosities of creed and race.

I have not as bad an opinion of the Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Nedim, as most people about me seemed to entertain, though of course I could not make much out of the short interview I had with him at his office, where all I was told by him, through an interpreter, was, that if I wanted to know the real truth of anything particularly interesting, I should always go to him, who would be sure *never* to deceive me, as "were he to tell me a lie to-day, it would be surely found out to-morrow, and how should he be the gainer by his falsehood?" He had a dignified old Osmanli countenance, with a high prominent fore-

head like that of a ram, expressive of determination and character. He was old—above sixty, I believe—and long dealing with men—for he had filled his present dignity more than once—had given him something of the soreness of a workman disposed to quarrel with his tools. He very openly complained of his inability to find functionaries able to aid him in his work, and remarked more than once to a foreign Ambassador, with great naïveté, "*Que voulez-vous? Je n'ai à faire qu'à des ânes.*" More is the pity that he could so ill brook the companionship of those whom public opinion pointed out as able, and what is more rare in Turkey, even honest; for he had managed to rid himself of Mehemed Rushdi, of Midhat, of Hussein Avni, and others who were destined to play a conspicuous part among the *dramatis personæ* on which the curtain was then rising. We have been told at full length how it was that the Grand Vizier became aware that himself and Midhat could no longer row in the same boat. At a Cabinet Council, held November 28th, Midhat, we learn, expressed his opinion that the situation was one of extreme gravity, that the evils of the country admitted of no mere palliative remedies, and that the reforms which were contemplated should in real earnest be based on the equal treatment of all the Sultan's subjects, irrespectively of any religious or national differences. His speech was hardly likely to carry conviction to the minds of his colleagues, and it seems that the outspoken Minister had resorted

to the European and perfectly constitutional, but in this country altogether unprecedented, measure of sending in his resignation to the Sultan. The resolution of the Sovereign on the subject could not long be doubtful.

Widely and deeply as corruption had spread and sunk among Turkish statesmen, it was believed by the opponents of the present Government that the Sultan would have found in such men as Midhat, Mehemed Rushdi and others, worthy Ottomans having enough of the old Mussulman truth and uprightness to point out to their Sovereign the path of duty; but preference for less stern and more complacent advisers comes natural to one accustomed to self-indulgence, and the mere fact that Midhat—as in a former instance Mehemed Rushdi—alluded to the necessity of curtailing the expenditure entailed by the construction and maintenance of those ironclads, which were then thought to be of no other earthly use than as mere toys for his Imperial Majesty, was almost certain to win the Sultan's immediate consent to the Minister's retirement from office.

Victorious as Mahmoud Nedim had been in his contest with Midhat, he could hardly feel any reliance on the firmness of his tenure of power. A breath had made, and a breath could unmake him. And this was, perhaps, one of the most grievous evils in the administrative system of Turkey. A state in which the Grand Vizier, the head of the Government, was as a rule changed four times in the year, and subor-

dinate functionaries, both in the capital and in the provinces, even more frequently, must needs be an edifice too hopelessly rotten at the core to admit of such a cure as the friendly and "officious" intervention of one man could suggest. The fault lay not so much in the general policy as in every branch of the administration. It might be true, as the friends of the Turk asserted, that there were in the "Great National Charter" of 1856 the elements of a liberal and equitable Government; but the causes which had been for these last twenty years at work to make the Hatt-i-Humayoun a dead letter, were not to be removed by that "moral support" to which the intervention of friendly Powers should, in the opinion of Turkey's advocates, be limited. It was not easy to reason with an absolute Sovereign as to the expediency of curtailing his power, of checking his extravagance, of husbanding the sums he squandered in the building of endless palaces, superfluous mosques, and useless ironclads. And had even Abd-ul-Aziz or another Sultan been amenable to that amount of self-denial which either his own sense of duty or the people's will imposes on a constitutional monarch; were, in other words, the scheme of a national representation and ministerial responsibility at all practicable in Turkey, it was difficult to see where one could look for an administrative class untainted with the appalling corruption which had been the order of the day for centuries. Let any one conjure up in his imagination all the symptoms by which a clear-

headed traveller in the latter part of the eighteenth century was enabled to foretell the approach of the French Revolution; let him multiply the disorders of old monarchical France by hundreds and thousands, and he would scarcely have an idea of the social chaos into which Turkey had fallen. I can say with perfect assurance that I nowhere met with one person truly convinced of the practicability of any imaginable reform in that country. "One may modify institutions," every one told me, "but not change men's nature. The Turks as a people will never know any other base of Government than force; they will never be made to understand that a Government official can have any other business than to build his private fortune at the public expense. There may be very honourable exceptions to the rule, it is true; but these are too few to leaven the mass, even if their honesty did not stand in the way of their promotion and call down upon them the displeasure of those to whom their integrity is a reproach."

Meanwhile, good or bad as the officials might be, something could have been hoped from them if they could at least have considered themselves safe from all capricious and undeserved removal, and if time were allowed to them to become acquainted with the duties of their office, and with the wants and interests of the people entrusted to their care; but the deep-rooted system by which almost every attendant at Court or in the Cabinet, not excepting even the Grand Vizier or

the Sultan himself, looked forward to baksheesh from a new candidate for place, prevented the grass growing under any *employé's* feet.

Nine or ten new appointments of Governors-General, or transfers of such high functionaries from province to province, appeared in the same Gazette under the same date. Indeed, these worthy Pashas had been of late so constantly accustomed to live in the saddle, as they rode from one to the other of their various destinations, that the Press, worn out by the mere effort of recording their movements, had ceased to accompany its announcements with its usual eloquent and somewhat fulsome praises of the Government for "the excellent choice of their nominees," deeming it sheer mockery to congratulate each province time after time on "its good fortune in being entrusted to the care of a Pasha so universally known for his wisdom, justice, and humanity," well aware that on the morrow the same and even more sickening adulation would have to be bestowed on another Pasha, by whom that paragon of all imaginable Governors would be superseded.

One of the servants of the State, for whom the Grand Vizier seemed to find it more difficult to provide a place, was the ex-Grand Vizier and Minister of War, Hussein Avni Pasha, a man destined to fill more than one page with his name in the record of the events which were rapidly maturing. Towards the middle of December, the Government of the Porte was said to have given a proof of great

vigour by arresting this valiant but somewhat mutinous and turbulent officer. Hussein Avni was, we had heard, on the eve of embarking for the Government of the *Vilayet* or Province of Salonica, to which he was appointed, but he put off his departure from day to day till it was understood that he had given up his journey altogether. The explanation was, first, that he tarried here to see what any change in the Cabinet consequent on Midhat Pasha's retirement might turn up for himself; then that he acted upon orders of the Sultan, who did not know how soon he might have occasion for his services. On Monday evening, December 13th, at nine o'clock, Hussein Pasha's *Conak*, mansion or palace, a vast wooden edifice, took fire, and was almost entirely consumed by the flames. The very considerable wealth which was accumulated in the house perished. The ladies and female slaves of the ex-Grand Vizier's harem had a narrow escape with their lives, while, with respect to Hussein Avni himself, some say he was in his own private apartment rather unwell, and rushed out precipitately, half clad, in his dressing-gown, to see after the safety of his household, and others assert that he was from home at the time the fire was first discovered.

Could the ex-Grand Vizier have any reason for setting his own house on fire? And would his arrest, if the intelligence turned out to be true, be the consequence of some strong suspicion the Government entertained as to his guilt as an incendiary,

or must his imprisonment be ascribed to any other cause? These were questions one heard debated, the only ascertained fact in the whole tale being the conflagration of Hussein's house, and the destruction of the upper part of one of the minarets of the adjoining Great Mosque of Solyman the Magnificent. We were told, however, that cases in which Ottoman Grandees burnt down their houses to the ground, with a hope that their losses might win the Sultan's sympathies and gain them access to his august person, were by no means unfrequent, few people ever obtaining admission to the Sovereign's presence without substantially benefiting by the interview. Hussein's arrest, however, if there had been any truth in the report, might be owing to a variety of other causes. He was known for his immense lately gotten wealth. *Trois fois millionaire;* and either the Sultan or his Ministers might be glad of any pretext to seize upon his property. Hussein was also supposed to be obnoxious to the Validé, the Sultan's mother, who, however fickle in her predilections, was described as a good friend to the Grand Vizier, Mahmood Nedim Pasha. It was natural to surmise that the men now in power had taken some umbrage at the presence in the capital of a man known for his ambition, his resolute temper, and his popularity with the army, and who once exercised so much ascendancy over the Sultan's mind as to keep his place as Grand Vizier and Seraskier, or War

Minister, for the lately unheard-of period of fourteen months.

The report of Hussein Avni's arrest soon proved to have had no foundation, but it is not uninteresting to inquire into the causes which had given rise to it. Soon after the fire which destroyed Hussein's house on that Monday was put out, a number of workmen were seen searching the ruins and piling up a quantity of arms of every description which had been found buried among the wreck. Not all the passers-by were aware that Hussein, like many other wealthy men here, had adorned his apartments with trophies of ancient weapons, and the sight of all that half consumed and calcined arsenal furnished the subject of wild conjectures, some of which were not altogether improbable. It was well known that no good will existed between Hussein and the Grand Vizier, Mahmood Pasha, the chief point at variance being Hussein's opinion that the speediest and surest way of ending the insurrection in Herzegovina would be a direct and immediate attack on Montenegro, a desperate measure from which Mahmood shrunk, fearing the displeasure of Russia, whose influence, it was supposed, powerfully swayed the Grand Vizier's Council. It was under the apprehension that Hussein, if lost sight of, might attempt to carry his views into execution, regardless of the wishes of the Government, that both he and his partisan, Husni Pasha, late Minister of Police, had been forbidden to leave the capital for their respective governorships

at Salonica and Yanina. The arms disinterred at Hussein's burnt house were, therefore, supposed to have been intended for some *coup de main* against Montenegro; while by some more imaginative people it was thought that they were destined for hatching that plot of a "massacre of the Christians," the anticipation of which haunted here diseased brains, in which some of the Softas, Mollahs, Ulemas, and other fanatical priests and army officers were suspected of being implicated, thirty-four of whom were said to have been arrested, and with whom Hussein Avni Pasha was supposed to be conspiring. Sane men, who "believe nothing," considered not only Hussein's alleged guilt, but the whole conspiracy, and even the imprisonment of the thirty-four, to be "pure fabrications;" the fact that the discovered weapons were only the relics of Hussein's warlike museum was fully established, and it was added that, among the collection, the sword of honour given by the Sultan to Hussein after the pacification of Crete had been rescued from destruction, though, alas! reft of the jewels with which the hilt was studded. We learned from the newpapers that Hussein was in retirement at his country seat.

Nevertheless the conduct of Hussein Avni continued for a long time to be a puzzle upon which it seemed impossible for the Grand Vizier to put a favourable construction. All the efforts of the Government to be rid of this formidable adversary by sending him, first to Salonica, and later to

Broussa, were for a long time unavailing. Hussein Avni insisted on choosing both time and place for what he well knew was meant as an honourable banishment. He was loth to go on any terms, and though he had been burnt out of his house at Stamboul, he could not be made to stir from his country seat at Scutari. Little as the absolutist views of this violent party leader had in common with those of the Ultra-Liberal Midhat Pasha, those two were now joined in an opposition league, in the hope by their combined efforts to win the Sultan's ear; a point very easily gained with a Sovereign of so wilful, and, at the same time, so fickle a disposition as Abd-ul-Aziz. This alliance, as we shall see, was productive of great events before the world was many months older. The ground upon which these two Pashas and their followers took their stand was —first, that the reforms announced in the last Firman were moonshine, and that what the country required was a *bonâ fide* reconstruction, based on a restriction of the Sultan's personal omnipotence and the introduction of representative forms in the Government; secondly, that the Herzegovinian insurrection should be put down with the strong hand, the campaign opening, if necessary, with the chastisement of the disloyal vassals of Servia and Montenegro. In their designs to give the country a constitution, and to subjugate the enemies of the Empire, these valiant patriots did not rely upon their own efforts. They were not persuaded of the

wisdom of that saying, "*Aide toi et Dieu t'aidera;*" they threw themselves helplessly and hopelessly on the ground, complained of the apathy and inactivity of the great European Powers, especially of England, and of the lukewarmness of the friends whose business it ought to have been to give them the victory over all their enemies. It was a necessity for Turkey, they reasoned, to attack Montenegro; but how could it be done if Russia put in her veto? and if Russia did so, why did not England veto Russia's veto? Little as they might expect that a general war could settle their own affairs, the Turks seemed to think they could bring it about whenever they chose, and they threatened the world with it. The war might not pay their debts, nor solve the Eastern Question in any manner favourable to their views and interests, but it would give them their revenge on the Christian Powers and involve all Europe in their ruin. As to any hope they might have either of swaying the Sultan's Council or of influencing the opinion of their fellow-countrymen, so as to work out those measures which seemed to them the only remedy for the country's evils, nothing could be expected of them. The boldness to "bell the cat," to speak out to their Sovereign, was not to be found in any of them. They feared for their necks, for the lace on their coat-sleeves; they would not incur the charge of demagogues or revolutionists. Every one in Turkey thinks it ought to be for his neighbour to act, and for himself to look on

and profit by whatever good fortune may send. A more abject prostration of all moral courage, a more complete absence of real self-reliance than even these few would-be patriots shamelessly exhibit could not be found even in Spain. Long self-indulgence among these Orientals has engendered incapacity for self-sacrifice; their religion has taught them the resignation of fatalism, not the heroism of martyrdom. "*Vincit qui patitur*" is not the device of the Crescent.

I was speaking in this sense to Saïd Pasha, the director of the artillery department at Tophaneh, a man who has long resided in England, and was a pupil at Woolwich college, who speaks very good English, and appeared altogether under the influence of European ideas. I shall never forget how he closed our conversation. "What would you have?" he said; "I had lived abroad till I fancied I had made myself a man, and when I came back to my country, I saw about me merely brutes; but I have now been at home for a few years and I begin to feel that I am becoming brutified like the rest." Does this Saïd, I wonder, now that he is Marshal of the Palace, and a constant attendant on Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid, still remember the words he uttered when in opposition to the Government of Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz?

CHAPTER IX.

THE TURKS AND THE GRAND TURK.

SULTAN ABD-UL-AZIZ.—POPE AND SULTAN.—THE SULTAN AND HIS MINISTERS.—THE SULTAN'S WEALTH.—HIS SPECULATIONS.—HIS CHARACTER.—PECULIARITIES OF THE SYSTEM OF THE SULTAN'S GOVERNMENT.

To have been at Rome and to have missed seeing the Pope used to be in the opinion of the Romans, the most irrefragable evidence of a man's poverty of spirit. It would be equally unpardonable in any traveller visiting Constantinople to neglect all opportunities of having a peep at the Sultan. Indeed, the more I think of it, the more I am struck with the many points the "Shadow of God" has in common with the "Vicar of God." The analogy is perceptible not only in the place each of them fills at the head of Church and State, but also in the influence their peculiar situation exercises on the character of the two men. Many, if not all, the evils of this world may be traced to that fatal error which invested a poor erring mortal with the attributes of omnipotence, which made the successor of the Prophet and the successor of the Apostle "infallible," and for that

very reason incorrigible. We have seen how miserably the well-meaning but greatly puzzled Emperor Napoleon III. wasted his time when he undertook to make the Sovereign Pope a man. The efforts of six or even of sixty Great Powers would be equally unavailing to shape the Grand Signior into a responsible being. The difficulty in both cases was and is, how to get at your man. To see the Sultan on his way to mosque is not more difficult than it used to be to get into St. Peter's when the Pope officiated at some of the Christmas or Easter solemnities; but to bring the light of the age to shine on the Padishah's intellect would be as desperate an undertaking as it was to talk sense to the "Servant of Servants," when a young American lady, anxious on a grand state occasion to be allowed to kiss the Pope's slipper, and being told that "only Princes of the Blood were admitted to that honour," had to argue that "her father, as an American citizen, was one of the Sovereigns of the Great Transatlantic Republic, and upon that ground she was entitled to all the privileges of royalty."

I spoke at that time to a personage who by right of his office was free to make his way into the State apartments at Dolmabacheh, and who was kind enough to give me some account of a recent interview he had had with the exalted inmate of that Palace. "The impression the Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz made upon me," he said, "is that of a man consummately bored" (*profondement ennuyé*). All the slaves of the best-

stocked harem cannot save Empire from its sense of unmitigated loneliness. Nothing, it seems, could equal the inanity, triviality, and utter blank of the Sultan's mind. He was not deficient in understanding; he could "gossip" on many subjects with glibness, refer to some of the phases in his existence—as, for instance, to his memorable European tour of 1867—with languid interest, and evince some curiosity about that bustling outer world which, to use the words of Eothen's Pasha, goes "whirr! whirr! all by wheels! whiz! whiz! all by steam!" But everything in his look and speech betrayed the gloomy ignorance in which his harem education had buried his mental faculties. He appeared altogether destitute of all powers of reasoning, incapable of any intellectual exertion, and especially of any such effort of imagination as might enable him to break through the magic circle of his concentrated selfishness, and to feel or even show sympathy with any living being. There was nothing so deeply seated in his brain as the consciousness that the whole world was made for himself alone. The Popes of old carved out the earth among foreign Potentates, and drew a meridian line, all to the West of which was to be awarded to the Catholic and all to the East to the Most Faithful King. The Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz seemed equally to think that all the land, the life, and freedom of the people of his vast Empire were things to be disposed of by him at his own pleasure as his absolute and indisputable private property. Some glimpse of an idea that he had duties to his

subjects, that the administration of justice and the promotion of the common welfare ought to have engrossed all his cares, did indeed now and then abstractedly shine through his benighted understanding. The fault, perhaps, lay not in his instincts or intentions, but he took it for granted that for good or evil he alone should be free to act; all power should be centred in his own hand; he alone should have a will. It was not that he deemed himself capable, or that he would be at the trouble of governing. Had he not got a Grand Vizier? Where would be the wisdom of "keeping a dog and barking himself?" And when he heard that the Imperial Treasury was exhausted and the Civil List in arrears, he asked: —"What is the use of a blockhead of a Finance Minister if he knows not where to find money?"

The Sultan's scheme of government consisted in bidding another to govern in his name; his deputy drew up a Firman or Iradé, addressed to himself, —"*A toi, mon Vizir*"—signed by himself, and laid for approval before a Sovereign, the first and foremost title to whose favour was "never to plague him about business." The decree which was to go forth in the Sultan's name was presented, but not read, and seldom explained at any length to his Majesty, whose mere nod was accepted as his approval and sanction, without any further need of seal, or signature. It was the then Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, who was at the greatest pains to impress his Sovereign with the

notion of his unbounded power, insuring thus for his own benefit a vicarious omnipotence, for the exercise of which he was responsible to the Monarch alone—a Monarch who, when dissatisfied with his Minister would not now send him the bow-string or the cup of coffee which disposed of unprofitable servants in the good old times, but would simply intimate to him that the light of the Padishah's countenance was withdrawn from him, and that he must make room for a successor.

The main condition on which a Grand Vizier or any other Minister could rely for his tenure of office was that the Sultan's will was not to be disputed, that no argument or remonstrance, no explanation or even apology was ever to be ventured upon with him. No observation, consequently, must be made, and, above all, none on the Master's extravagance or self-indulgence. The "Shadow of God" was, after all, a man, and had his own little fancies and weaknesses, his expensive toys and wasteful luxuries. He had his horses and carriages, his gilt barges, and lusty Albanian oarsmen, his slaves and eunuchs, his "follies" in those long rows of empty kiosks and palaces, barracks, mosques, and unemployed ironclads. Strange to say, he combined with all this insane lavishness, with all this staring magnificence, the most tight-fisted avarice, the lowest instinct of saving and hoarding. He had, it was said, three millions of gold hid away in his cellar, and held eight millions worth of his own precious Consols. Where a man's treasure is, as we

all know, there his soul lies buried; and it is no wonder if we heard that the Sultan was haunted by incessant suspicions and terrors, and that he went so far in his precautions as to endanger his health by a diet of hard-boiled eggs.* His ostensible advisers, and still more his secret favourites and sycophants, flattered both these propensities, and encouraged every whim which prompted their pampered lord to make money or to spend it. Every public enterprise, every financial operation to which the Sultan's consent or patronage had to be won, was represented to him as a scheme conducive as much to his personal emolument as to the general well-being of his people. Of every national loan by which the disorder of the finances has been palliated for these last twenty years the Head of the State had always had the first share. Nothing could seem pleasanter to him than to see dogs of Franks and Christians, not only ridding him of his difficulties by taking his paper, but also paying him gold in return for it. What other people bought for hard cash the Padishah accepted as a present, and the Grand Vizier's act of October, 1875, which bade other bondholders to whistle for half their dividends, never affected the Sultan, who re-

* English readers are still laughing at the telegram announcing that "His Ottoman Majesty was suffering from indigestion, caused by eating eighteen hard-boiled eggs;" but few, perhaps, reflected that the disorder arose, not so much from gluttony as from a desire to appease hunger by the only food with which, as the Sultan thought, no poison could be mixed.

ceived his interest in full, as I stated at the time, and as, in spite of all contradiction, every one in Turkey could confirm. In the same manner, and on the same principle, the Sultan became the first shareholder in that commercial and maritime enterprise which bears the name of the "Azizieh Steam Navigation Company." The Sultan was made to feel that it was both a misfortune and a disgrace that the Ottoman Empire should have no mercantile navy, and that even the coasting trade of that favoured region should be almost entirely in the hands of Greek, French, Italian, Austrian, and other shipowners. His Majesty's ambition was fired, a nominal company was instituted, and a certain amount of its shares was, by way of a sample, tendered to his acceptance. It turns out now that the stock-in-trade of this so-called society consists of a number of wretched vessels which would be doomed to lie idle in port were they not too often taken up by the Porte for the transport of troops and war material. The boats are, in reality, owned by the Admiralty, which appoints the directors of the supposititious company. The profits of the enterprise are as imaginary as the company itself, but the dividend of the Sultan was no less punctually and regularly paid, the understanding being that the higher the sum received by His Majesty, the greater would be his satisfaction with the present state and future prospects of the association, and the safer would be the Minister of Marine's tenure of office. It is more than notorious, however,

that this sham company sinks yearly a large sum of money. The late Essad Pasha, a comparatively wise and honourable ruler, when Grand Vizier looked into its accounts, and proved that in eighteen months these showed a deficit of £300,000. After such a discovery was made public, no one could be surprised to learn that Essad Pasha's premiership was brought to an abrupt termination.* The Sultan's handsome yearly dividend, as I said, was paid, no matter at what cost. Some of the officials came in for some good pickings, and the gross annual deficit of the "company's" balance-sheet was placed to the debit of the Admiralty, and figured as wages or stores for the Navy. Thus a serious subtraction of revenue was periodically effected; and money which ought to have been applied to the purposes of the administration in general, and to the payment of public creditors in particular, was diverted or perverted to the support of a fictitious mercantile marine enterprise, and, in reality, to a flagitious scheme for putting money into

* The suddenness of the death of Essad Pasha and the symptoms exhibited by his very short illness have given rise to strong suspicions that he was poisoned. Immediately on reaching Smyrna, where he was sent as Governor, he was seized with strong fits of vomiting, and died within eight hours. People had not forgotten the fate of Mehemet Rushdi Sirvanizadeh, who was carried off in the same manner upon his appointment as Governor in Yemen two months before, and whose death was ascribed to pernicious fever, but the symptoms of whose complaint were identical with those which preceded Essad's death. Could these alleged crimes be proved, they would only show that Turkey has not yet broken with her old traditions.

the private pocket of the Sultan and of some of the men who ruled in his name.

In pursuance of this dishonest purpose, be it observed, the Porte had always opposed itself effectually to every *bonâ fide* attempt of private enterprise to create a steam company under the Ottoman flag. Every step in this direction was invariably frustrated by the onerous terms demanded by the Government for the hire of these wretched boats, and by the practice of the Admiralty in seizing on them for transport purposes, without ever compensating the hirers. The Azizieh boats, from their known deficiencies, could not, of course, compete with the foreign companies on any of the great coasting lines ; but on smaller lines, not frequented by the large steam companies, they drove off private enterprise by reducing the fares until they secured a monopoly.

From this single instance of the malversation of the resources of the country by the Administration, it seems easy to infer that the evils of Turkey admitted of no cure which should not begin by the emancipation of the Head of the State from the general run of his advisers, and by some contrivance which should bring the force of public opinion to bear upon him. So long as he was allowed his own way, the Ministers who best kindled or fostered his passions, humoured his caprices, and, above all things, most plentifully supplied his purse, were always the most acceptable to him. It is difficult to see by what means truth might be made to find its way to the

throne. The Sultan, though so conspicuously visible, was, in reality, the least accessible of Sovereigns. People approached him with as great an awe as if all the thunders of Jupiter were ready to burst from his footstool. The Ministers, and other high functionaries admitted to his presence, bowed down to the ground and shaded their eyes with their hands, as if unable to bear the sun-like blaze radiating from the Sovereign countenance. The Grand Vizier summoned by the Padishah on business, early in the morning, was often kept waiting in the ante-chamber till late in the evening, when he received an unceremonious intimation, through some chamberlain or eunuch, that His Majesty "would, for that day, dispense with the Sadrazam's presence."

Every Ottoman subject, from the loftiest pasha to the meanest hamal, seemed to labour under some vague terror of the Sultan's power, as well as of his ungovernable temper. Doubts were even entertained as to Abd-ul-Aziz's sanity, and it was believed there was hardly any excess to which a sudden outburst of his wrath might not carry him. Indeed there are dark tales afloat of his having, in more than one instance, abused the right that his title of *Hunkiar*, or "Man-slayer," gave him over his subject's lives. One of his besetting weaknesses was an almost superstitious fear of fire, and it was said that he would allow neither lamp nor candle to be carried about in the palace after dark. One night as he was groping along the corridors one of his favourite female

slaves came suddenly out of her apartment, taper in hand, to light his way. He turned upon her in a towering fury, felled her to the ground, trampled upon her, and, as she was in Poppæa's interesting condition, the poor officious girl succumbed to the same fate that the Roman Empress met at Nero's hands. Whatever may be thought of this and other stories, which might well prepare us for the tragic end of Abd-ul-Aziz's reign and life, there were people about him who thought that all the Padishah's frequent raging and storming were only a desire to conceal his inborn timidity, and that, had a man been found brave enough to beard the lion in his den, he would, by the very flash of his steady eye and resolute mien, have readily tamed the imperial brute. A hero of that mettle was not, however, forthcoming. The men who ought to have pointed to the Sultan the way he should go, were either too much interested to lead him wrong, or too much afraid to tell him what was right.

From my first landing in Turkey I saw myself beset by a crowd of pessimists, who looked upon any imaginable step of the Ottoman Government towards progress as an absolute impossibility. There has never been, there is not, there can never be, they said, a Government in Turkey. The Osmanlis came into this country only to crush and plunder, not to rule their Christian subjects. They never aspired to organise a community, for the very rudiments of government were unknown to them. They professed

to allow, and in a certain measure allowed, their provinces the enjoyment of their own local institutions, for the very good reason that they had nothing to substitute for them. They simply deputed a Pasha or Proconsul, whose business it was to make money for the Sultan and for himself by whatever means his own caprice could suggest, and to administer some sort of rough-and-ready justice. For the rest, they were only too glad to suffer their Christian subjects to administer their local affairs as they deemed most expedient, in obedience to the same necessity which still compels them to give Christians the almost entire monopoly of their diplomacy; viz., from their utter unfitness to take upon themselves duties for which their exclusive military education had little prepared them. They were a soldier caste, and disdained every employment that did not entirely refer to the art of war. With the downfall of their military power, the business of the Turks was at an end. They sank into inglorious repose, while their Christian subjects, unable to uphold right against might, acquired habits of abject submission and of habitual cunning and duplicity which in a great measure disqualify them for that self-government for which they are so loudly clamouring.

I am not surprised at anybody's sympathy with the Turks, for they and the Spaniards are still, in manners, the first gentlemen of Europe. But I do not think any one can entertain kindly feelings towards their Government. I do not

believe any one, unless it be Lady Strangford, can "love" the Sultan or his Ministers. One may pity the Sultan, because, such as he is, he is only what his education in the harem, his early dissipation, and the flattery and abject prostration of all around him have made him. Like the Pope, the Sultan is not a person, but the result of a system—a system which one could never sufficiently abhor ; and it is difficult to see how any scheme of reforms which should not begin with the overthrow of that system can lead to any satisfactory results. Such a sight as an eye-witness described to me one of these days ought to be held decisive on this point. He was standing on the footpath of one of the Galata thoroughfares near Tophaneh, towards evening, when a tramping of horses preceded the arrival of a Court carriage, conveying the Sultan's son, Izzedin Effendi. An unfortunate Armenian carter was obstructing the way, and although, on hearing the cavalcade, he did his utmost to drive his restive horse aside, he was unable to master the wretched animal so as to give way in time. He was fallen upon by the outriders with their whips and so belaboured by the zaptiehs, or policemen, hastening to the spot, that when at last they left him he was hardly able to move. The young prince, whose carriage was thus unavoidably detained half a minute, sat and looked on unconcerned, and proceeded on his way to the palace, apparently satisfied that the chastisement inflicted on one of his father's inoffensive subjects was simply an

act of homage due to his exalted rank. I remember just such a scene in one of the streets of Naples in the days of King Bomba, in 1834; but years have passed since the Government of that King was stigmatised as "the negation of God," and I wonder how long it may be before the Sultan's Government is made to understand that such a treatment of human beings as I have now described is no longer to be tolerated in Europe.

Reform, I repeat, must begin in the household of Dolmabacheh, and I do not believe that the Grand Vizier or any foreign Ambassador has conveyed a hint to the Sultan to that effect. Lady Strangford, I understand, in her interviews with the Grand Vizier, insisted upon "the importance of devising some scheme for the education of women of the upper classes," and she was answered that "the subject had been taken into serious consideration by men high in authority, and by no one with greater interest than by the Grand Vizier himself." But I fear the Grand Vizier, if he be in earnest, will find the rehabilitation of the sex in a Mohammedan community very hard uphill work. It no longer happens so frequently as it used to do that European ladies walking in the streets of Pera, in sight of the Foreign Embassies, have their arms pinched by the insolent Turkish soldiers; but an unfortunate "hat-wearer," who by an evil chance was sauntering along the garden wall of a Turkish country-house, had a brickbat thrown at him by one of the eunuchs, be-

cause he just glanced over the low fence. The brick-bat was ill-aimed and did no harm, but on going cautiously over the same ground on the following day the Frank found that the wall had been raised by a couple of yards, and he was thus safe from a repetition of his involuntary offence and of its intended punishment.

It is difficult to foresee how long walled-up ladies and eunuch guards will continue to be the rule in Turkey, and even more so to imagine what resistance any attempt to strike the evil at the root may meet on the part of the besotted and fanatical Mohammedan population. Already, thanks to the inspiration of Softas, Ulemas, and men of that cloth, the exasperation among the Moslems from the very announcement of the alleged "Reforms" was becoming dangerous, and their ill-will was turned, not so much against the Christians, as against the Government, whom they charged with abject weakness for their proposal to introduce innovations in the laws of the country at the Giaour's suggestion, and with incapacity in dealing with an insurrection stirred up at the Giaour's instigation. The Imperial Firman of Reforms and the Civil War in Herzegovina were both, in the Moslem's estimation, the consequence of the Porte's subserviency to the European Powers. The Moslems bore no goodwill to the Powers, but they harboured something very like contempt for the Porte. Already symptoms of the evil mind of the people towards the Christians were

apparent in occasional breaches of the public peace, reports of which found their way into the newspapers, notwithstanding the gag imposed by a rigid though stolid censorship on the public press. A Christian, living under the protection of the French flag, had taken up his quarters in the ward of Aïnaly-Tchesme, at Pera, inhabited by a mixed population of Moslems and Christians. On a dark Thursday morning the day after his installation in his new abode, a mob of Turkish women, children, and men of all ages assembled before the house, smashed all its windows, broke through the door and invaded the house, crying "Get out, Giaours!" The Mukhtar, or mayor, and the Imam, or priest of the district, led the riot. Three of the zaptiehs, attracted by the clamour and by the sight of the furniture, which the rabble sent down flying from the windows, deemed it their duty to interfere, but far from protecting the Christians, they made common cause with the law-breakers. They knocked the man down with the butt-end of their carbines, and dragged him, his wife, and children to the station-house, whence the poor family were only released after four hours' durance. The house, meanwhile, was gutted by the populace from the basement to the garret. The humour of the multitude, in short, is by no means reassuring. I hear persons sneer at the idea that any real mischief may be apprehended on the part of such wretched hinds as the rabble of Stamboul consists of, and I am told that "a whiff of grape-shot would be suffi-

cient to clear the streets of whole legions of such beggars." The question is, where are the men to fire the grape-shot? for, in the case I have quoted, the local authorities and the public force were on the side of the populace, and in any effervescence of evil passions public order has no worse enemies to fear than the very soldiers whose duty it ought to be to maintain it.

CHAPTER X.

TURKISH REFORMS.

OLD AND NEW FIRMANS.—MAHMOUD NEDIM.—MIDHAT.—REFORMS IN ITALY AND TURKEY.—THE STATE AND THE NATION.—THE TURKISH CHARACTER.—POLITICAL.—COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL.—BAZAARS.—CEMETERIES.

It was an understood thing — reforms were to be introduced in the Ottoman administration. The appeal to arms of the Herzegovinians, the uproar of the bond-holders of the Turkish debt defrauded of the payment of half their coupons, had made the Sultan, his advisers, and the whole world aware that there was "something rotten in the state of Turkey," and the Grand Vizier, with all his Cabinet, were determined that it should be made sound again. Somehow, however, the anticipations of the people were not very sanguine. The imperfections of the administration had been noticed in many former instances. Reform had been again and again the order of the day. Hopes had been raised, invariably attended by grievous disappointment. Men had not forgotten the *Tanzimat*, the *Hatt-i-Sheriff of Gul-haneh*, the *Hatt-i-Humayoun*, and other Imperial charters

and decrees, Firmans and *Iradés,* all intended as sovereign remedies for the cure of the sick man, the effect of which had been to bring him to the present desperate condition.

There was little faith in the reforms themselves, and still less in the men by whom they were to be ushered in. Mahmoud Nedim, the Grand Vizier, was by nature a despot, and had at all times encouraged his Sovereign's most despotic propensities, and dismissed those members of the Cabinet who were thought to be earnest in the cause of freedom. "Mahmoudoff" was, besides, heart and soul a Russian, and the measures by which the Government was to be modified were suspected of having been adopted at the suggestion of that arch-enemy, General Ignatieff, the Russian Ambassador. The Firman of reforms had, however, to contend with something worse than the scepticism and ill-will of those few of the Sultan's subjects who took some interest in the matter. It had to conquer the utter supineness and apathy of the masses; an indifference arising, on the part of some of the populace, from a conceit that "no reforms were needed;" on the part of others, from a conviction that "no reforms were practicable."

Those who remember the wild enthusiasm with which the mere announcement of a general amnesty convulsed Rome and Italy at the beginning of the Pontificate of Pius IX., were not a little taken aback when witnessing the outward signs by which

the people in Turkey manifested their sense of the inestimable boon vouchsafed to them by that Firman of the Sultan, which, taken to the letter, might be considered so decided a step in advance of the many former "Hatts," which had in every instance been described as "amply sufficient for all the wants of the Ottoman subjects." Only a few days before the publication of the Firman, in mid-December, the Pera journals were denouncing the grievous error of those foreign writers who ignored the existence of a "Turkish patriotism," and who imagined that the only bond of union of the empire lay in the attachment of the Mussulmans to their creed. "There is," they said, "a people of Turkey, true to its national traditions, alive to national aspirations, and prepared to follow its rulers in any step that may lead to the development of national life." If this be so, with what waving of flags, with what illuminations or bonfires, did this Turkish patriotism greet the edict by which the Sovereign gave a first intimation of his readiness to come to terms with his people? Alas! in Stamboul it can be safely asserted that hardly one in a thousand of the Padishah's subjects, Mussulmans or Christians, ever heard or read one syllable of the Imperial Firman; and even in Pera, those very same patriotic journals—their name is legion—suffered three days to pass before they found room in their columns for the precious document, and even when they published it, they either gave the text without one word of friendly or

hostile comment, or spoke of it with a coolness or calmness which froze the blood in the reader's veins.

Are we told that experience had taught them what value might be put on the Sultan's bounties, and that they looked upon the new, as on the old national charters, as so much waste paper? Did they feel that they could address their Imperial master in the words of the opera, *Siete Turco, non vi credo?*" But with the Italians, also, belief in any possible conciliation of Romanism with freedom was very faint, and they knew what hopes could be built on such a phenomenon as a "Liberal Pope." But the Italians had faith in themselves. They felt confident that with that papal "inch" that was held out to them an "ell" would soon follow, and they so worked on the vanity, helplessness, and imbecility of that "Benevolent Pope" as to overthrow seven States, build up a nation, and eventually to sap the foundation of the Papacy itself.

The Sultan's subjects, Christians and Mussulmans, even the very journals which professed to look upon Turkey as a country, were well aware that there was for their "nation" neither a past nor a future; that the present was chaos, and that utter confusion and dissolution alone could lead to unknown reorganisation and revival; that Islamism must continue as it is till it ceases to be, and that no human foresight can imagine what may eventually take its place. Blind Oriental fatalism here

equally paralyses the Moslem and the Giaour. No one dreams of a possibility of either political or social reform, no one can harbour the least faith of even a first step in the way of progress, no one can anticipate a mitigation of the hideous, all-pervading corruption. There is not a man in Turkey, not a statesman, not a patriot, there are hardly the elements even for a conspiracy or a popular riot. The Christian journals in Pera seemed scarcely to find words harsh enough to stigmatise the disloyalty and presumption of the Herzegovinian insurgents—"What do these insane mountain boors and brigands disturb the public peace for?" they said. "Have not the Turks their national charter? Is not the Sultan's the best of all possible Governments?" And when the Sultan himself belied them by his Firman, which promised equal justice, humane taxation, wise administration, and economy as so many *desiderata*, they had not one syllable either to answer him that they had already got all that—all they wanted—as they asserted, or else to tell him that, whether or not they relied on his promises, they must have all he engaged to give; that they would take him at his own word; and they intended that this time there should be no delusion. Most decidedly, reform in Turkey would never have been mentioned, never have been dreamt of, had not those few shots of Herzegovinian rifles and the clamour of the creditors of the Porte suggested the necessity of a new mystification.

The reforms promulgated by the Firman of December, 1875, embraced various branches of judicial, political, and financial administration. They tended to emancipate the courts of law from Government influence, and to ensure the perfect equality of all the subjects before the law, without distinction of race or creed. The Minister of Justice was to be dispossessed of his judicial functions as President of the Court of Cassation, and the commercial tribunals would be detached from the Ministry of Commerce, and made subordinate to the Supreme Court. The judges would be permanently appointed, and not removable without a "legitimate cause." Judges of provincial courts were to spring from popular election; but the presidency of provincial and of district courts was reserved for the *Naïb* (the assessor of the *Cadi*) or for some other officer of the Crown. All lawsuits between Mahommedans and Christians or other non-Mussulmans must be referred exclusively to the civil tribunals. There would be a reduction and unification of taxes. These would no longer be collected by the police, but by a tax-gatherer elected by the people in each district. The police would be chosen among the best inhabitants of each district. The tax for exoneration from military service of non-Mussulmans should only be levied upon men between the ages of twenty and forty. Exoneration from military service to Mussulmans would be granted on a charge reduced from one hundred to fifty Turkish *lire* (the *lira* equal to

18*s.* 6*d.* There were other provisions for the abolition of the *corvées*, or compulsory labour, for the commutation of the *prestation*, or labour tax, for the removal of all restrictions on the erection of places of worship or schools, and of all hindrance to the possession of real estate for the non-Mussulmans, and finally for an equal admission to all offices in the public service of all the Sultan's subjects, without distinction of creed.

All these concessions, if taken to the letter and fairly interpreted, would have amounted to a very important popular Bill of Rights, and ought in a great measure to have met the demands of that part of the population which considered itself particularly aggrieved. It is not certain that Midhat Pasha, had he remained in the Cabinet, or had he been placed at the head of a Ministry of his own choice, would at the time have had any better scheme of reform to propose. He left Mahmoud's Cabinet because he thought that the remedies projected by the Grand Vizier would be inefficient to put an end to "the frightful disorder of the finance," to "the lax discipline of the troops," to "the defective system of provincial administration," and other crying evils of the community, and because he was unable to bring in his own scheme, which was to be based on a perfect, absolute equality before the law of Mohammedans and Christians; on the institution of a permanent Council, consisting of thirty-five unpaid members, partly to be appointed by the Government,

and partly to be elected by the taxpayers, a Council to be charged with the discussion and control of the Budget; on the extension of the provincial system, with a view to the establishment of communal rights, and the development of the electoral principle; and finally, on the independence and responsibility of the Ministers of the Crown.

The time came when Midhat was to make the experiment of his full budget of constitutional liberties, and we shall see how he acquitted himself of his task, but, with respect to Mahmoud's reforms, those who declared that they were "all moonshine," and that "nothing would come of them," could hardly claim much credit for prophetic gifts; for, whatever might be the Grand Vizier's real intentions, he was allowed neither the leisure, nor the ease of mind, nor the pecuniary means by which the provisions of the Firman could be carried into effect. Time would have been required to establish the principles and practice of popular election, and it would have taken little less than a miracle to supply the *personnel* for the reformed tribunals, and for a less disreputable police, unless the salaries of these officials had been so raised as to place them in somewhat independent circumstances, an arrangement which would have imposed new and heavy sacrifices on the State; the alternative lying between the necessity of healing the universal corruption of the administration and the other no less urgent necessity of effecting some reduction in the public expenditure. What, besides, may be con-

sidered "legitimate causes" justifying the removal of an "irremovable" magistrate, and within what limits the abolition of *corvées* and other grivances of the non-Mussulman population might be affected was not and could not be clearly defined, because the essentially arbitrary character of the Ottoman Government was in no way to be affected by the projected reforms. The question, as it soon became evident, was one of "guarantees." Every reform would be illusory which was not undertaken by a minister bold enough to intimate to the Sultan that the welfare of his subjects required a curtailment of his despotic power, the creation of a deliberative Council and of a responsible Cabinet—something, in short, which should place the law as emanating from the people above the caprice of the Sovereign's rule. A sufficiently absurd report was current at the time that the Sultan intended to ensure to the then Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Nedim, five years' tenure of office. But the mischief lay not merely in the fickleness of his Majesty in the choice of his advisers, but also, and much more, in his preference of those who recommended themselves to him by their abject subserviency to all his wishes. There is a story current at Dolmabacheh about Midhat's first appointment to the Grand Vizierate, and it is to the effect that the Sultan had received from Europe the model of a new toy of a fire-engine, and was trying to work it with the assistance of his Sadrazam (Essad, it was at

the time, I believe) who, either from sheer awkwardness or from distaste for the menial employment, so managed as to turn the stream of water full on the face and breast of the Padishah. The untoward accident led to the immediate expulsion and dismissal of the clumsy Grand Vizier; and, as Midhat chanced to be at hand as a morning caller, and, upon his being bidden, plied the pump with a will, and showed his Sovereign how the "flow of his bounties should be turned not upon himself, but upon his people at large," he was then and there taken into favour, and for three months guided as Grand Vizier the destinies of the country.

The anecdote may be "true or well invented," but the fact is that neither Turkey nor any other country can be satisfactorily constituted, till the men at the head of the State spring from the will of the majority of the people, and are responsible to it. The Midhat constitution has not, as we shall see, hitherto introduced the least modification in the Turkish Government in that respect.

The truth of the matter is, however, that both Mahmoud Nedim and Midhat, and all other projectors of reforms and constitutions for Turkey, have overlooked the main obstacle rising against their enterprise—*i.e.* the absence in the Ottoman Empire of what in all other countries constitutes a nation. No efforts have been made, none are even now seriously contemplated, to efface the traces of the conquest of four centuries ago. The Turks, or

Osmanlis, still consider themselves the dominant race, and resist all amalgamation or fusion, not only with Christians, Jews, and other "unbelievers," but even with the Arabs of Asia Minor and Syria, and with the Pomacks of Bosnia and Bulgaria, the former of whom professed the Koran long before it was acknowledged by the Turks themselves, and the latter who accepted it at the conqueror's hand at the time of the invasion. We are told, but we must accept *cum grano salis*, that the Turks are the most tolerant people in the world, and it may, perhaps, be admitted that in certain localities the condition of the Mussulmans is even worse than that of the Christians, inasmuch as these latter manage to place themselves under the protection of some foreign Consular agent interested to see them righted, while the Mussulmans have absolutely no person to whom they can apply for redress. But that is not all that is wanted—it is by no means what is wanted—as a basis of a fair and equitable government. What has never been done, or even attempted in Turkey, is to create the Turk; to bring about that reconciliation between the conqueror and the vanquished which have made of the Frank and Gaul a Frenchman, of a Norman and Saxon an Englishman.

Those of my English friends in Turkey who profess to love the Turks, admit in many instances whatever one may say in condemnation of the detestable Turkish government; but they should reflect that, in Turkey as in all other countries, the govern-

ment is the immediate result of the people's character, and, in the case of Turkey, of the character of that conquering race, who, as long and as far as they were able, jealously monopolised the government and turned it to their exclusive advantage. The Osmanlis came into this region as a warrior caste, and even in their warlike enterprises they only excelled in those virtues by which victory may be secured, but not those by which it can be turned to practical purposes. War was their only employment, and they never developed any aptitude for other pursuits. Their leaders seized upon the land, and the multitude settled upon it, a mere set of shepherds and clumsy husbandmen, out of whom the ranks of their national host were recruited. For the whole business of government, and even for their military and naval organisation, they were dependent either on the conquered population or on aliens, with whom religion rendered any amalgamation impossible. The family itself was based on principles of blind and jealous despotism, subject to the rule of a eunuch, who was only inferior in authority to the head of the establishment. We buried, in the spring of 1876, Soulha Agha, the First Eunuch of the Imperial Palace; his burial rites were celebrated in the Mosque of St. Sophia, and his remains were laid in the Mausoleum of Mahmoud II., by the side of those of the great Sultan. Djever Agha, one of the twelve veteran eunuchs—the rank and file of the eunuchs at the palace exceed one hundred—was appointed his suc-

cessor, and we learnt that the titles by which his office is designated are *Devletu Mayetlu* (*très fortuné, très puissant, et très misericordieux*), and also that all the State dignitaries hastened to congratulate him on his promotion. His salary is £T.600 monthly, or £T.7200 a year, and he takes precedence of all State functionaries below the Grand Vizier and the Sheik-ul-Islam, or Head of the Church, with whom he ranks as an equal. The late Chief Eunuch had accumulated a fortune of £T.220,000; which, as he left no heir, reverted to the Sultan, his master. The new Chief, on his appointment, was decorated with the Grand Cordon of the Supreme Order of the Osmanlié.

In every family of distinction the eunuch is equally the master's prime minister, and women and children mere slaves brought up under his sway. The State, which must everywhere be the aggregate of families, depends for its development on eunuch education; its most exalted members, and the Sultan himself, are doomed in early life to the idleness and seclusion of the domestic harem. And as houses of ancient descent have almost disappeared, and advancement in the State, and even in the army, is matter of sovereign favour, and Pashas and Viziers are, as a rule, mere *parvenus*—it follows that there is in the country no such thing as a governing class, no set of men qualified by tradition or by special training to fill the most important places either in the civil or in the military departments of the public service.

Were there no other men than Turks in Turkey, even such wretched government as now exists could not be carried on. In the Grand Vizier's Council, in every Ministerial office, in the War Department, in the Admiralty, there is always the Mussulman invested with the shadow as well as with the emoluments, but the Christian, Armenian, Greek, or European in possession of the drudgery, and also of the substance, of that power of which the Sultan is the fountain-head. The Sultan's mere caprice appoints the Mussulman Minister, but the Under-Secretary, most of the clerks, and all the book-keepers, the diplomatic or Consular agents, some of the Governors of Provinces, and all their secretaries and councillors are Christians; the Mussulmans who occasionally fill such places owing their appointment to some exceptional circumstances, either of birth or family connections, which bestowed on them the advantages of a European education.

In spite of all that has lately been done to establish Imperial Colleges, Lyceums, and even Universities for the benefit of Mussulman students, and of the free access allowed them to flourishing Greek, Armenian, and Frank institutions, the initiation of Turkish children into such studies as might fit them for useful public or private employment has hitherto been attended by no very satisfactory results. Intellectual development is, after all, hereditary, and the Turkish brain has for too many generations lain fallow not to be distanced in the race with minds

with which a certain amount of at least practical cultivation has never ceased. The Turks, like the negroes, are not without some aptitude for the mechanical and imitative pursuits which are merely matter of the senses. They can be made to write a fine hand; they are instinctively good musicians; but in all sciences tasking the faculty of abstraction, and especially in mathematics, or even arithmetic, they break down at the very rudiments, and their teachers' efforts to overcome their innate obtuseness are altogether hopeless. There is no ambition or even avarice that can ever make a Turk a saraff, or a man of business. There is no such thing as a Mussulman banker or even money-changer in Constantinople. Banking establishments, I believe, without an exception, have their quarters in Galata, and are exclusively in the hands of Greeks, Armenians, and Jewish or Christian Franks; and the hundreds of exchange offices, mere holes in some lurking corners to be found at every step at the shop doors, or underneath the shop windows of every crowded street on either side of the Karakeui bridge, where men with greasy red caps, or tattered black or yellow turbans, are perpetually rattling their copper coins from hand to hand to attract the attention of the passers-by, are either kept by Jews on their own account or by low-caste Turks, who only superintend the business, leaving the actual transactions to smart Jewish or Armenian accountants.

The glory of the famed bazaars of Stamboul has

departed from them. The trade in jewellery, silk, embroidery, and all goods of high value is now carried on in shops of some pretensions, opened on either side of the Grande Rue of Pera, where the Christians have the monopoly, and where the chairs and carriages of Turkish ladies stop in the afternoon, especially on Fridays, the shopkeeper or his assistant standing with his goods at the carriage window, for by an order of Abd-ul-Aziz Mussulman women are not allowed to alight and walk in, the pretext of shopping having in former times been made a screen for intrigues, and the show-rooms upstairs or at the back lending themselves to the purposes of stolen interviews. The bazaars are still in existence, nevertheless, and they are an especial object of curiosity to strangers who are either in quest of the few articles of native manufacture and of such antiquities, heirlooms, and nicknacks as the wreck of great Oriental families brings into the markets, or simply interested in the oddities and peculiarities of Eastern life. A lounge in these bazaars, when a long drought has made the mud of their slippery pavement at all practicable, is not without its attractions, and it epitomises not a few of the main features of the Levantine character. What strikes the beholder on a first view is the quaintness of the buildings, the universal mass of dirt of all things and persons, and the closeness and unwholesomeness of the air that pervades them. The bazaars are a maze of long narrow passages shut in on both sides by high and

massive walls, ending in arches overhead, open or not open to the air and light, clumsy but lofty structures in the semblance of the aisles of old cathedrals, some of them evidently of great antiquity, crossing one another in endless turnings and at all sorts of angles, the arches of one gallery in some instances obstructing, intersecting, and dove-tailing into those of another, as their construction was carried on at haphazard at various epochs, and the exigencies of the moment interfered with all ideas of order or design, as well as with every consideration of comfort or even safety.

How hard it is for anything like real trade to be carried on in these cramped localities will be easily imagined if we bear in mind that on Fridays the faithful Moslem is away to his mosque, on Saturdays the pious Jew is forbidden to touch money, and on Sundays the acute Greek, the wily Armenian, and the tricky Levantine observe the Lord's Day; besides which there are fast and feast days for all the different sects, when every manner of work is at a standstill, as all know to their cost who, like Sir Henry Elliot, have to re-furnish an Embassy, or, like Baron Werther, to raise a new palace from the ground for the accommodation of their diplomatic establishments. Add to this that the business hours for the bazaars are very limited; long before sunset no living soul, save the watchman, is allowed to move about in them; stores and shops are shut up, and any stranger who ventures to look in is awed by just

such haunting terrors as one who chances to be shut in after dark among the sepulchral monuments of an old Gothic minster, or in the labyrinth of the Roman Catacombs.

During the short period of daylight, however, the variety of shapes and colours of the motley crowd by which those narrow passages are beset, and of the endless wares laid out on counters or dangling at the entrance of those interminable rows of shops and booths, the picturesque though ragged costumes, the uncouth cries, the wild gestures of the huckstering rabble, constitute a scene of unequalled quaintness, and bewilder as much of the senses of a newly-arrived visitor as is left him by his efforts to withstand the tide of the throng that sets in against him, or that of the throng which jostles him along with it. Here are carpets and rugs, embroidery from Broussa, Cashmere shawls and Chinese silks, glittering daggers and swords from Damascus, rose-water from Adrianople, ermines, brocades, slippers, pipes and amber mouth-pieces, every variety of Turkish and Persian, mixed with every specimen of cheap Nuremberg and Birmingham industry. The Mussulman merchant himself sits on his legs behind his counter; he smokes his chibouque, strokes his beard, and makes no sign. But he relies for custom on his brisk Jew or Levantine assistant, a crowd of whom fasten on the visitor and stick to him like leeches, pestering him with their cry "Need not buy, sare! Only come in, sare! Just look in here, sare!" till

the poor victim has bribed one of them to rid him of the importunity of the rest. Venture into one of the booths, and you will soon have a fair evidence of the proverbial honesty and fair dealing of the commercial Moslem. Nine out of ten articles of Persian manufacture and of the *antica*, or old curiosities, are shams, and the imitation is so clumsy as to be easily detected by the initiated. Here is a casket with Arabic inscriptions, the letters of which have been unwittingly reversed by the illiterate forger as it was transferred from a genuine into a spurious article, so that what was written from right to left is now to be read from left to right. Here is an old Damascus blade which had been inlaid with gold by the original smith only a few inches from the hilt, but has subsequently been covered to the very point with the same metal by the restorer, who thought the quantity and not the quality of the ornament would enhance the value of the weapon. Daggers are offered for sale, the sheaths of which were lost or the hilts broken, and to which odd hafts and scabbards have now been fitted at haphazard, making them a jumble of incongruous workmanship; and modern unrivetted shirts of mail, such as the Circassians still use, or lately used as the mere bravery of warlike attire, are palmed on blind customers as knightly chain-armour of Crusading times.

As no scruple is felt by either the Turk or his associates about putting off these flash articles on the customer, so neither is there any compunc-

tion about the swindling price which is put upon them. The author of "Eothen" justifies the practice of haggling and higgling which, common as it is throughout the South of Europe, is nowhere carried to such an extent as here, by the necessity in which "an ordinary tradesman in Constantinople is of finding out the fair market value of his property." The truth is, merchandise has no real value in the Stamboul bazaars, and the trader's skill consists in taking advantage of a stranger's inexperience to make him pay from twice to ten times the price he would be able to extort from a less ignorant customer. It is to little purpose that you try to escape imposition by tendering half or even one-third of the sum asked as the negotiation opens. "Done, Sare!" is the reply to your offer, however modest it be, and you find, on comparing notes with a travelling friend, that you would equally have been "done" had you offered one-fourth. Neither does it any longer avail to pretend to leave the shop and go to a rival establishment, for what used in other times to be competition among the stall-holders in the bazaars is now combination, and conspiracy, and Moslem traders, as well as Jew brokers and touters, eagerly play hand in hand, common interest leaguing all these Oriental tribes against the unwary "hat-wearer" from the West.

As in the bazaar, so in every public or private transaction, the Turk in our day exhibits all the unscrupulousness, though he does not attain the

consummate cunning, of the Levantine Christian. Among those beasts of prey the Mussulman may be the lion, and the Giaour only the jackal, but it is not always to the stronger that the best share of the prey falls. As useful, industrious, and punctual mechanics, there is not one pin to choose between men of different faith. They all eschew hard work, and leave road-making, canal-digging, etc., to Austrian and other Slav immigrants. Want of skill or application makes the natives of this country awkward and slovenly in any style of nice workmanship. Nowhere is masonry or carpentry at so low an ebb; nowhere is the performance of the locksmith, the window-frame maker, the plumber and glazier so wretched; nowhere have you to contend with more stubborn doors, windows, or drawers. Away from the country the laziness of the people is prodigious; idleness and its concomitant vices, desperate gambling, debauchery of the worst description, and hideous beggary, gnaw the very vitals of society. Neither among Christians nor among Mussulmans is there any attempt to make up by private enterprise for the short-comings of the very worst of Governments. Where the house falls or is burnt down there the ruins are left to moulder; where the refuse of the dog's meat lies there it is allowed to fester. Were volumes written on the subject no idea could be conveyed of the all pervading dirt and filth of the towns and villages on the Bosphorus. The very cemeteries for which Mussulmans are said to harbour a parti-

cular veneration, are suffered to fall into the most inconceivable state of neglect and dilapidation; the fences, where there were any, all broken down, the cypress trees stripped of boughs and bark, stray dogs making kennels of the tombstones or even burrowing holes for a troglodyte home among the graves. Any spot more bleak and desolate than the Jewish burial-ground on the heights, in the rear of Hasskeui, it would be impossible to imagine; with the mangy turf of the hills, studded with stone slabs throughout its vast extent, it suggests on a distant view the idea of a field of battle, with the bones of the slain bleaching upon it. There is not a bush, not the stalk of a flower growing upon it; the brittle soil crumbles down here and there in deep ravines, and many of the tombstones, slipping from the spot where they stood, have slid down into the stream beneath, and lie there huddled in heaps embedded in the mud like outcasts in Gehenna. A country neither to live nor die in! No pavement or drain seems ever to be repaired here, no fountain or cistern purified or mended, no precaution taken against cholera or any other kind of pestilence; no real protection afforded to life or property; no criminal, if he has money and knows the use of it, called to account. No other people in the world, one cannot help thinking, would put up with such a police and such magistrates as are here charged with the execution of the laws. The Mussulman monopolises the trade of arms. The Turks are good soldiers; they are brave men, and their indif-

ference to hardship, and contempt of death, certainly raise them, in point of physical courage, many degrees above their unwarlike Levantine fellow subjects. But moral cowardice is equally the bane of the whole population of the Empire. Except for the supineness and abjectness of all its subject races, how could the Sultan's Government be so incapable of good or so powerful for evil? Mismanaged as the affairs of this country have been at all times there has never been a period in which blind absolutism, utter improvidence, and rampant disorder have been so conspicuous. The worse the rulers have grown the more debased the subjects have become; the more pressing and galling has been the tyranny, the more flagrant has appeared the incapacity of the trampled people, not only for resistance, but even for complaint or remonstrance. Into this hopeless condition has this fine country been thrown by four centuries of Turkish supremacy.

CHAPTER XI.

MUSSULMANS AND CHRISTIANS.

THE TURKISH GOVERNING CLASSES.—TURKISH EDUCATION.—TURKISH HOMES, SCHOOLS, AND COLLEGES.—HOME-KEEPING AND TRAVELLED TURKS.—THE ABYSS BETWEEN TURKS AND CHRISTIANS.—CHRISTIAN EXEMPTION FROM MILITARY DUTY.—PROBABILITIES OF A GENERAL MILITARY CONSCRIPTION.

An honourable gentleman, rather a *Turkomane* than a *Turkophile,* who has often edified the House of Commons by his views of Turkish affairs, expressed his regret at the abolition of the "Old Ottoman Constitution." He might have been more correct if he had lamented the disappearance of the Ottoman governing classes. There never was what we should consider an aristocracy in Mussulman countries; but there were, nevertheless, about the Sultan's person, families in which a certain practice in the management of the public business passed from father to son—gentlemen of Nature's own making, with whom wealth and rank had become as hereditary as the martial bravery, the high honour and truth, which characterised the Osmanli of the early school. Such was the stuff of which Viziers and Pashas were once made. There

was not much legislative knowledge or judicial discernment among them; but they had upright and generous instincts; they were conscientious men, and aspired to be as just as ignorance and prejudice would allow them. In the Provinces, again, there were the descendants of the conquerors and early settlers, possessors of the land from generation to generation, who under the name of Derebeys, in time of war, led the labourers of the land to battle, and in days of peace exercised a certain authority as a sort of country magistrate. The Bashi-Bazook hero, who distinguished himself in the first encounter with the Russians near Batoum, at the outbreak of the present war — 1877 — Tchuruk-Su Ali Pasha, belonged to this Derebey class. This class, however, has greatly dwindled in numbers and wealth, and is fast disappearing; it has been deprived of its former local importance, and the Government, thus taken from such men as had a stake in the country and could exercise hereditary influence, has been invaded by Caimacams, Mutessariffs, and other minor officials, a low-born, needy, grasping, and utterly unprincipled bureaucracy. Every branch of the administration is filled up with four times as many *employés* as would be required, most of them uneducated and useless, drawing small pay, but jobbing and robbing to eke out a livelihood, so that corruption, discontent, and a low standard of character of public men are maintained throughout the Empire. Fitness is never considered. The round peg is everywhere thrust

into the square hole. A soldier is put at the head of the Navy; he who takes the Portfolio of Finance one day will be transferred to Public Instruction the next; a Master of Ceremonies is made General Inspector of the Courts of Law; and a man who is fit for nothing else—if he is at all in the way of the ruling powers, and these have no other means of ridding themselves of him—is saddled upon a Province as Governor-General. The Sultan is easily made to think any man competent for any place, and as to those about him, the best man is he who bribes highest. As the heads of departments are, so are their subordinates. The country is in the hands of men without education, as proud and jealous as they are ignorant, covetous, and incapable, with an uncertain career and scanty patriotism; and it is under such guidance that Turkey has to make and keep her place among civilised nations.

It may seem rash to assert that the Osmanli are in the mass an uneducated people. But such instruction as they usually receive can hardly fit the best of them for governing purposes. As the mother is, so will the child grow up; and it is the misfortune of the Moslem of the better classes to be brought up in the unwholesome atmosphere of a harem, in the charge of an affectionate but untaught mother, secluded from social intercourse, shut up with slaves, and as deprived of all power to think as of pure open air to breathe. A Turkish child is a spoilt child from the beginning. From his first

instincts of observation he has the example of idleness, caprice, and self-indulgence before him; decked out in gaudy dresses, cloyed with sweetmeats, you can see him any Friday afternoon in the Grande Rue de Pera, sitting in his mother's lap, and staring with all his eyes out of her carriage window, stunted and bilious, but grave and wise-looking, bewildered by the unusual sight of the outer world. Upon issuing from infancy, the children, boys and girls promiscuously, are, if they belong to a wealthy family, placed under a *Hodja*, or tutor, a sort of Mohammedan *Ignorantin*, half priest, half schoolmaster, who makes them read and learn by heart the Koran and prayers in Arabic—to them a dead language—and perform the *temenah* and all those other social "ritualistic" obeisances, genuflexions, and hand-kissings, which to some zealous Philo-Turks seem the utmost attainment of perfect courtesy and moral refinement. This, till they reach the years of discretion, when they are put asunder—the girl to learn sewing and embroidery, perhaps a little playing on the piano, and the boy admitted into some public office.

For the offspring of the lower orders the same intellectual food is provided in the public school, by an old Mohammedan institution attached to every mosque, where the Arabic Koran is used as the beginning and end of all knowledge.

Something like a new era for public instruction in Turkey was ushered in under Sultan Abdul Medjid at the close of the Crimean

War, a score of years ago. Primary schools or colleges were opened under the auspices of Fuad and Aali Pashas, and even a university was inaugurated in a large building opposite to the Mosque of St. Sophia, called *Dar-ul-Founum* (the House of Arts or of Knowledge), now the Chamber of Deputies of the Ottoman Parliament. It was intended for youths of all races and creeds, no difficulty arising about the amalgamation even in bed and board of Moslem and Rayah, and was supplied with good teachers, chiefly French, under the influence of M. Bourée, the French ambassador, and the direction of M. Salme. All the tuition was in French, but the study of Oriental languages was also attended to. The books were at first French, and knowledge had to be imparted in that language; but some few elementary works for the primary schools and for the younger classes in the Lyceum were translated or edited by Ahmed Vefyk, the secluded scholar of Roumeli Hissar, now President of the House of Deputies. The Sultan Abdul Medjid took great interest in the progress of the institution, and countenanced with his presence the distribution of prizes and other academical solemnities. But the Sultan died, M. Bourée left the country; the new Padishah, in his distress for money, laid hold of the funds of the endowment, many of the French teachers were dismissed, many of the Mussulmans withdrew their children, and the institution languished; the building was used for

Ministerial offices, and the University was banished to other localities.

The same fate awaited the Medical School, which was erected for purely military purposes by Sultan Mahmoud II. at an earlier epoch. The Medical School, placed under the direction of Dr. Bernhard, a German, and ten other able professors, all from Vienna, was at first established at Galata-Serai, an old government palace, in the spring of 1876, in Pera, but was rusticated to make room for the Lyceum, and removed to Kumbar-haneh near the Sweet Waters of Europe. The Lyceum itself subsequently passed over to Gul-haneh, in the old seraglio, whence it was hastily sent back to Galata-Serai, when it was expected that M. Bourée, as representative of the French bondholders, would revisit Pera, and might ask what had become of the institution on which he had bestowed such fostering care. In spite of all these wanderings, the Lyceum, still designated as a College or University, was till lately flourishing under the guidance of Savas Pasha, an Albanian physician educated in Italy, whom Midhat lately appointed Vali or Governor-General of the Islands of the Archipelago. Savas's place as Rector of the Lyceum was then filled by Ali Suavi, a "young Turk," long a resident in Paris, not soon to be forgotten there for many reasons, and a friend and host of Mr. Butler Johnstone. The Lyceum musters 640 pupils, Christians and Mohammedans, the teaching creditable, and the re-

novated institution promising good results, though want of funds, consequent upon the general distress of the Turkish finances, is now greatly stunting its growth, and threatening it with extinction.

In not much better condition, it may be presumed, is the Medical School, where German instructors have been superseded by ignorant native teachers, and the Anatomical and other Museums have suffered from frequent migrations. The surgeons and physicians required even for the naval and military services are still in a great measure supplied by foreign schools, and what ideas of the profession are entertained may be inferred from the fact that merely for lancing the Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz's boil, an operation for which the meanest phlebotomist would be competent, Omer Pasha, the court doctor, received a remuneration of £T.1,000, with some jewellery, and the rank of a general of division. The continuous and conscientious habit of study and devotion to medical science does not recommend itself to the Turkish student, and the population is in the hands of quacks and wise women, sticking to the old superstitious practices of sorcery and ignorant empiricism. Of the Military Academy at Pankaldi, and of the Naval School at Halki—the latter till lately under the direction of Said Pasha, the man educated at Woolwich, and of Captain Wood, an English naval officer—nothing need be said; as any good they may do must be seen in the officers they

send forth for employment in the army and navy. The tree is known by its fruit.

Under such backward and precarious conditions, and with so little encouragement, has knowledge to make its way in this benighted community; and one cannot help asking, where are the legislators and statesmen, the governors, the magistrates, the myriads of high and low functionaries to whom the destinies of an empire are intrusted, to come from? In other countries, with a living language and a flourishing literature, self-education is practicable at all ages, and the diligence of the mature student can make up for lost time in early life. But your Turk does not care to read, and has no books to read, and if he is untravelled, he has no access to foreign thought, the Grand Vizier himself often knowing not one word of any language besides his own. On the other hand, the gentlemen who may be supposed to have benefited by a foreign training or foreign travel are looked upon as "Europeanised"—*i.e.*, they are charged with having acquired European vices while retaining in full vigour those of their own country.

It is a fact which cannot be too often repeated that, were there only Turks—only Mussulmans—in Turkey, to carry on even such a Government as now exists would be a sheer impossibility. The Turk, as we have seen, does not trade; he is no merchant; he is not a banker; he cannot count or calculate; he is an absentee landlord; he is no farmer, and knows

nothing about the management of his estate; he is dependent for his subsistence on Government offices; but, even as a placeman, he is a mere incumbrance, for all the useful work is done by the Greek, the Armenian, or the Jew under him, the men of those subject races who are as indispensable as they are despised, and who, superior as they are in ability, are only trusted with ill-requited subordinate offices. That the ignorance of the Moslem could, if anything like religious and political equality were established, be tempered by the intelligence of the Rayah, is a matter which admits of no doubt, for the Christians, and especially the Greeks, have excellent schools and colleges of their own, and the most promising pupils frequent foreign Universities, either at their own expense or helped by subsidies from their community.

In all institutions where Christians as students fraternise with the Mussulmans, as in the Lyceum, these latter are compelled to avow themselves beaten at all points of scholastic proficiency. But these intellectual advantages of the Giaour are, in the Moslem's opinion, marred by the false and cunning instinct which turns knowledge itself into an instrument of treachery and deceit. Unless means are found to cure the ruling race of its mistrust of the subject people, or the subject people of its deep, though not loud, contempt for the ruling race, little hope either of harmony and goodwill between them, or of instruction, civilisation, and enlightened go-

vernment for their common country, can be entertained.

The longer I have looked at the conditions of the Ottoman Empire, the stronger has grown in me the conviction that no remedy can be found for its evils save in such measures as might tend to obliterate the differences and mitigate the inveterate hostility of races. There can be no self-government in a country where the law insists on distinguishing between various categories of subjects. There can, on such terms, only be the government of one caste by another. The root of all injustice in this country lies in the privilege of the Mussulmans as a military caste. The Osmanlis came into the country as conquerors; they looked upon the land, the women and children, the herds and flocks of the vanquished race as their own property, to be held and enjoyed by the Rayah at the Moslem's entire discretion. It was only by paying the *Harach*, or poll-tax, that the Giaour could hope to keep the head on his shoulders. That tax was levied indistinctly on every individual of the male population of the non-Mussulmans till the days of Fuad Pasha, when its name was changed into that of *Bedelieh*, or exemption, and was exacted from the Rayahs in consideration of their freedom from military service. The Imperial Firman of Reforms of December, 1875, has in so far modified that poll-tax that it is now no longer to be levied, as it used to be, on every Rayah from his infancy to his extreme old age, but only between his twentieth and

his fortieth year, the time of life corresponding to the period during which the Moslem is liable to service in the army. With respect to the Moslem himself, the tax of exemption is to be reduced from a hundred to fifty Turkish lire.

What is, therefore, henceforth to be the condition of the various subjects of the Empire? To the Mussulman the option is given to bear arms for his country, or to buy himself off. The non-Mussulman has no such alternative. He must pay for an exemption which is forced upon him, whether or not he can muster the ransom money; and this because he is still a pariah, a despised being, not to be allowed to carry a musket, as he was till lately deemed only fit to ride a mule or a donkey, the horse being much too noble an animal to be ridden by the like of him.

By this improvident adherence to the present exclusive organisation of their military establishment, the Government of the Porte, in the first place, seriously damages and cripples the resources of the empire by causing its conscription for an army amounting on the war footing to 586,100 men, to fall upon less than one-half of the population, and, as a rule, on that stout Mussulman peasantry wherein lie the thews and sinews of the nation; in the second place, it wounds the feelings of the other half of its people by maintaining disabilities which rankle in their hearts as reminiscences of the abject servitude to which the right of the

strongest reduced them. It is easy to say that the Jews, the Greeks, the Armenians, and other non-Mussulmans are an unwarlike race, only too glad to escape a soldier's duty, and perfectly willing to compound for their exemption. But clearly the means of escape from the draught would be equally open to them by simply placing them on the same footing with their Mohammedan fellow-subjects; while, as it is, the military law confers on the Moslem a right as well as a duty, on the Rayah it simply inflicts a fiscal burden, aggravated by a sense of deliberate social indignity.

There was, I am told, no point on which Sir Henry Bulwer, when he was ambassador at Constantinople after the Crimean war, dwelt with greater insistence than on this necessity of saving the Ottoman empire by creating an Ottoman people. There is no school, he thought, in which the various elements of a mixed race may be better blended together and moulded into a common national standard than a military training; no medium in which sectarian prejudices may sooner be made to yield to less unbrotherly feelings than the *camaraderie* of barrack-life; no surer way of crushing rancours and jealousies than an equal rule of stern discipline. Let the subjects of the Porte be made into real soldiers, and they will soon forget whether they be Mussulmans or Christians. This was Sir Henry Bulwer's opinion, and it was so forcibly conveyed to the ministers of the Sultan at the time that the enrolment of the

Christians in the ranks of the army was taken into serious consideration. The subject was dropped soon after the death of Fuad Pasha, and by the time it began to be evident that the Hatt-i-Humayoun of 1856 would remain a dead letter. But it is greatly to be regretted that no thought of a return to the ideas of that epoch occurred to those at whose suggestion Mahmoud Nedim's Imperial Firman of Reforms was drawn up. The great point at issue in everything connected with the existence of the Ottoman empire is the religious question. You must either make one people out of Mussulmans and Christians, or one of the two races will eventually destroy the other.

It was owing to the difficulty of devising any pacific solution of the question that most people thought that the knot could only be cut, not solved, and were disposed to look upon any hope grounded upon the reforms contemplated by the Sultan's Firman as absolutely illusory. M. Rénan said: "Si aujourd'hui la Turquie fait de vains efforts pour constituer une société fondée sur l'égalité des droits, c'est qu'elle lutte contre un principe séculaire et fatal. Héritier des Khalifes, c'est à dire Vice-Prophète, le Sultan ne peut plus présider un Etat mixte, où croyants et infidèles auraient les mêmes droits, que le Pape ne pourrait, si la moitié de ses sujets étaient Juifs ou Protestants, leur faire une part dans les Congregations Romaines ou le Sacré Collège." And as the Pope had, according to this clear-

sighted French writer, become "impossible" ten years ago, and all the anxious endeavours of the Emperor Napoleon III. to "rejuvenise the old Chimæra" foundered against the stubborn will of the Roman people, so must the half theocratic system on which the Sultan's authority is founded break down, and at no very distant period, unless, as a first step towards a reformed administration, a means is found of bringing the people of different race and creed to meet together as on a common ground in the army, that institution in which a uniform organisation is most practicable, and in which men may most easily be broken and made amenable to rule. We were always told, it is true, that no gentle or harsh means can be contrived to induce the Moslem to associate in the same ranks with the Rayah ; that, owing to the abominable habits of the Turks, Christian youths in barracks would be exposed to nameless outrages, and that, on the other hand, if attempts were made to enlist Mussulmans and Christians in separate battalions or squadrons, collision between the different corps whenever they might be brought together would be inevitable. And the argument was further made to rest on the fact that even in the prisons Mussulmans and Christians have to be kept asunder in separate wards and courtyards, lest they should fall upon and tear each other to pieces, a statement which, so far as my experience of the present state of Stamboul prisons went, is not correct; but which, if true, could

only prove that all hope of saving Turkey from ruin must be abandoned. For, be it remembered, accord between the two hostile races is not more hopeless than the continuation of the present oppression of one race by the other. But one may, after all, be allowed to question whether the animosities between the various races are, indeed, so implacable as it is asserted, whether the ill-blood is not the result of misgovernment, and whether it is not rather from want of goodwill than of power that the Sublime Porte is at a loss for a remedy to the evil.

Mussulmans and Christians, we are told, could not be made to serve together in the army; yet by the terms of every new Firman they are to work together as police; they will be chosen by popular election to be organised into a *gendarmerie*, which in well-regulated Continental countries is a *corps d'élite*, not only belonging to the army, but having precedence over all the rest of the army. And the Hungarian Count Szechenyi has found it perfectly practicable, not only to organise a fire brigade, consisting indifferently, I believe, of Christians and Mussulmans, but has even made these latter doff the fez and put on a helmet—*i.e.*, a hat—that badge of Western civilisation which was an abomination to all Islam. It is my firm conviction that the Government here, beginning with the Sultan, are not unable, but obstinately unwilling to remove the barrier which keeps one-half of their subjects asunder from the other. To bring about a reconciliation everything

should be studied to tame the arrogance of the Moslem and to raise the Rayah from his abjection; and it is not at the polls, not in an electoral assembly, not in Courts or Councils, or even in the Cabinet, that the two races will ever be made to feel equally at ease. The first necessity is to secularise the Government; to substitute the law for the Koran; to separate the King from the Pope, now combined in the person of the Sultan. It is perfectly absurd to say that the thing is impossible. It seemed by no means difficult to such men as Sir Henry Bulwer or Fuad Pasha eighteen years ago. But if it be indeed impracticable then the re-establishment of peace, the restoration of the finance, and the reform in the administration—in one word, the existence of Turkey—are also impossibilities. If the Padishah intrenches himself behind his barrier of a Pontifical *Non possumus*, then an ignominious downfall, like that of the Pope, awaits him.

Meanwhile, upon the first intimation of contemplated reforms, in February, 1875, the Bulgarians of the Commune of Tirnovo, Province of the Danube, backed by the population of twenty-three villages, addressed a petition to the Grand Vizier, praying that his majesty the Sultan "would deign to admit them to military service." They felt humbled and grieved, they said, when they saw their Mussulman fellow-subjects alone intrusted with the defence of the common Father-land, while they must, "to their shame, and in spite of their well-tried devotion to

the Sovereign, purchase exemption from their sacred duty. The principle of equality set forth in the recent Imperial Firman of Reforms, on the strength of which men of all races and creeds were invited to contribute to the well-being of the empire, they argued, "would never be established till they were allowed to accompany their Mussulman brethren to the battle-field. And the conviction of the Mussulmans with respect to the inferiority of the Christians could never be uprooted as long as they enjoyed the proud exclusive privilege of shedding their blood for their country."

This view of the subject is not new in Turkey, and it has found utterance through other than Christian lips. Kybrizli Mehmed Pasha, one of the wisest and most honourable Osmanlis who ever filled the Grand Vizier's place, said, almost in the very words of the Bulgarian petitioners, "*Nous ne pouvons considerer les Chrétiens comme nos égaux tant qu'ils ne porteront pas les armes comme nous pour la défense du pays.*" It is not true that either mistrust or contempt at any time prevented the Mussulmans from employing their Christian subjects for military purposes. The Janizzaries, formerly the nerve of the Ottoman forces, were to a great extent recruited among the Christian population. Brave and hardy as the Turks, like all other Southern people, can be made by drill and discipline, they saw in their subject races, and especially in the Servians, Wallachians, and Bulgarians of the provinces lying north

of the Balkan, stalwart men by whom the very best stuff out of which to make soldiers could be supplied. They laid hold, not of the adult men, but of the growing male generation, placed the boys under military and religious instruction, and trained them for service in that Imperial Guard which became a political as well as a warlike institution, tempering by its sudden instincts of rough and ready justice the worst abuses of arbitrary rule. The newly-adopted *enfans de troupe* were easily persuaded, or, perhaps, compelled to embrace the Mohammedan faith, but adherence to the creed of his fathers did not altogether disqualify from the service a Christian recruit otherwise satisfactory, and as their connexions with their families did not altogether cease, and they were not quite inaccessible to the seductions of a bribe, the Janizzaries were often found among the most zealous advocates of Christian interests, and counteracted the unjust predilections the Government evinced in favour of the Mohammedans. Mahmoud II., in his first attempt to Europeanise his State, rid himself by a massacre of his turbulent Prætorian Guard, and reorganised his forces into a regular army—*nizam*—on the plan of a general draught, from which the Rayahs, or non-Mussulman subjects were excluded, their exemption being purchased by the payment of a yearly poll-tax, which took the name of Bedelataskérieh (*impôt pour l'exonération du service militaire*). This tax of twenty-seven piastres a head (a piastre equal to two-pence)

was levied indiscriminately upon all the males of non-Mussulman families, all the Mussulman males being bound to serve unless they paid a sum of eighty Turkish lire for their exemption. By the Firman of Reforms of Abd-ul-Aziz, it was decreed that the exemption tax on the Christians should fall, not on all the males, but only on those between the ages of twenty and forty, the period of service in the army; and, at the same time, that the ransom for Mussulmans who wished for exemption should be only forty instead of eighty Turkish lire. By these provisions, had they been carried out, the public revenue would have suffered a considerable reduction; and, as the Ottoman treasury was at the time, as at all times, greatly distressed for money, the Grand Vizier explained to the spiritual chiefs of the various non-Mussulman communities that it was not meant that the exemption tax should yield one farthing less than it heretofore did, but that the deficit arising from the emancipation of the males under twenty or above forty years of age, and of those whom infirmity might unfit for service, should be made up either by their families or by the districts to which they belonged; "a community, which, for example, used to pay 1000 piastres per annum on this score being still required to contribute the same sum"—a very good earnest of the extent to which the government of the Porte, in December 1875, considered itself bound to carry out the promised reforms.

The first answer by which the objectors to this inequality among the subjects of the same State are met is, as I said before, that the Christians enjoy, in fact, a privilege, and that they would be very sorry if their exemption from that "tribute of blood" which is the curse of all the Continental States in Europe were to come to an end. Many of them, however, entertain a different opinion. A meeting of members of the different non-Mussulman communities was held lately to discuss the subject, and their delegates had subsequently an interview with the Grand Vizier. The result was that the Greeks and Armenians, who were represented by men belonging to the mercantile class, seemed to accept the conditions imposed by the Firman, and preferred to pay the tax; but the Bulgarians, speaking in the name of an agricultural population of three millions, were unanimously ready to vote for admission to military service. The spiritual chiefs of all Churches and sects, Patriarchs, Exarchs, etc., have officially conveyed the same opinion to the Grand Vizier. Indeed, it is clear that the Christians would lose nothing by being put on a footing of equality with the Mussulmans, whether they chose to serve or not. For, however trifling the tax of twenty-seven piastres, or four shillings and sixpence, which falls on every male for twenty years, may seem, it amounts to four pounds six shillings at the end of that period, and the family or community has to be charged at least four times the amount for the exemption of the whole

male generation under or above that period, and of those whom deformity or infirmity would render unfit for duty. By accepting the lot of the Mussulmans the Christians would have the option between serving and paying the ransom of forty lire. The same difference in favour of the wealthy classes would exist here as existed in all Continental countries under the old conscription laws, and it would most assuredly be in favour of the Christians, and especially of those Greek and Armenian commercial classes with whom money is most plentiful.

The real difficulty, therefore, lies in the repugnance the Mussulmans are said to evince to the admission of the despised Rayahs into their ranks, but there are among them many on whom the privilege they enjoy as a military caste weighs almost intolerably, and to whom the condition of their Christian fellow-subjects appears most enviable. "I and my village neighbour," said an old Mohammedan peasant of the neighbourhood of Bourgas, in Bulgaria, "were equally blessed with four gallant sons. My neighbour, as a Christian, paid his twenty-five piastres tax for each of them. My boys, as Mussulmans, were all pressed for the army, it being impossible for me to muster the 240 lire for their exemption. The consequence is that I in my old age, all alone, must whistle at the plough, and can hardly get bread out of my half-tilled farm, while my Christian neighbour has his four stalwart pair of arms to work for him. Their fields are in the best trim; the

family thrive, the old man goes with his boys to the village wakes, where they sing and dance the gayest of the gay." Extend this pathetic picture to the whole empire. The burden of its military establishment falls with its crushing weight on less than half the population. Turkey takes the field like a man fighting with his right arm tied behind his back. The rapid decrease and impoverishment of the Mussulman race, who, when not in the ranks, are nothing if not husbandmen, are felt as grievous evils for which, in spite of all bigotry and prejudice, only one remedy—that of the admission of the Christians into the ranks—can be suggested.

The question of the admission of non-Mussulmans into the army has often cropped up during the warlike phases through which the Ottoman Empire had to pass in the course of these last eighteen months. It seemed to be set at rest by the Midhat Constitution which declared all Ottoman subjects without distinction of nationality or religion to be in possession of the same rights, and bound to the discharge of the same duties. Christian and Jewish volunteers besides were, in fact, during the Servian war, allowed to enlist as volunteers, and even to form into battalions, which were in some instances to take the field under a standard bearing the Cross and the Crescent on the same ground; and, at the time, Sir Henry Elliot in his despatches, and Mr. Disraeli in his place in Parliament, believed, or seemed to believe, in the reality of that novel phenomenon, and

augured from it a happy era, a kind of millenium for Turkey. I shall have occasion to state how that delusion, which only took in those who wished to be deceived, was immediately dispelled by stubborn reality. More lately, the Russian war looming in prospect, the government of the Porte entertained the idea of a levy *en masse* of 200,000 men to be taken from Constantinople and its adjoining territory, a district which had hitherto been altogether exempt from military service, the conscripts to be drafted from the whole population, Mussulmans as well as non-Mussulmans; and the understanding was that the same system of universal conscription, equally applicable to all the Sultan's subjects, was to be extended to all the provinces of the empire; but, as we shall see, although the government of Abd-ul-Hamid sees the necessity of some such measure, as it was seen the year before last by the government of Abd-ul-Aziz, and by that of Abd-ul-Medjid eighteen years before, it is very questionable indeed whether the idea will ever be carried into effect, as it is rejected by the prejudice strongly rooted in the Mussulman mind, that the Christian is too ignoble a being to be honoured with the use of the soldier's weapons, and by the, perhaps, more reasonable apprehension that he is too dangerous to be trusted with them.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GOOD AND BAD OF THE TURKS.

CHARACTER OF THE TURKS.—OSMANLIS AND MUSSULMANS.—HIGH AND LOW TYPES OF TURKS.—PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT.—OLD AND NEW TURKISH ATROCITIES.—MR. BUTLER JOHNSTONE ON TURKISH MANNERS.—TEMENAH AND SHAKING HANDS.

In the course of a residence of nearly two years in Constantinople, I became aware of a great change in the disposition of mind of the European, and especially of the English colony in that place, with respect to the Turkish Government and people. When I arrived, scarcely anything that could be said against them seemed to be hard enough. Business men at the Galata banking-houses were still smarting under the heavy losses with which Mahmoud Nedim's Iradé, of the 6th October, 1875, reducing the interest of the Ottoman Debt fifty per cent., threatened them, and they did not know how far this first calamity might be aggravated by the results of that Herzegovinian insurrection, which, happen what might, could hardly fail to continue through the winter. The Government had at that time very few friends among the Pera Bond-holders; all the Em-

bassies, and especially the English, being jealous of the ascendancy exercised on the Grand Vizier and his Cabinet by General Ignatieff, who was thus thought to be at the bottom of all Turkey's troubles. But as matters went from bad to worse, and the ruin of the Empire began to appear inevitable, the men whose interests were indissolubly bound up with its existence, forgot the very worst things they had ever spoken against the people among whom their lot was cast, and they never mentioned them by any other appellation than the "poor Turks," the "dear Turks." They pitied both the rulers and their subjects as men more sinned against than sinning, they emptied the vials of their wrath against those "cursed Russians," and contended that "there was no insurrection in Bosnia or Herzegovina, but merely an inroad of brigands instigated and paid by spies and agents of Russian and Austrian Panslavist committees, the ranks of the combatants being mainly, and indeed wholly, filled by volunteers from the semi-independent Principalities of Servia and Montenegro." With respect to the non-payment of one-half of the coupons, these advocates of the Turkish Government also insisted that there had been "no repudiation, either total or partial, of the public debt, as the Porte had never been unwilling but only *unable* to pay, and would be sure to meet its liabilities to the full amount *whenever payment might be in its power.*"

Apology for the Government was naturally fol-

lowed by loud flourishes in praise of the people. "The Turks," it was said, "are a brave, simple, sober, race of men. True bravery is incompatible with cruelty; their simplicity and sobriety tend to limit their wants and to banish from them all envy or covetousness of other people's goods; they are naturally honest and truthful; their early habits, plain diet, cleanliness, chastity, insensibility to pleasure and pain, give them that peculiar soundness of mind and body which supplies their army with the healthiest and hardiest recruits to be seen anywhere in the world." All this was said, and it is, in the main, perfectly true of the lower classes in the country, in rural districts, where the panegyrists of the Turks have few opportunities to visit them. In some of the provinces of Asia Minor, in out-of-the-way villages, not only are the people of Osmanli race and creed an inoffensive, respectable, patriarchal set of men, irreproachable in their conduct and primitive in their manners, but they live together with the Christians, Greeks, and Armenians, either in the same or in neighbouring villages, in peace and charity with them, seldom interfering with them, though they love them little and esteem them less; and without absolutely shunning them, they certainly seek not their intercourse.

This, however, does not with equal justice apply to the population of the cities, nor to some of the Mussulman races to which both the native Christians and indiscriminating strangers apply the general

appellation of Turks; not, for instance, to the Circassian immigrants in Bulgaria and other European provinces, nor to the Kurds of Armenia, and other parts of Asia Minor, all lawless, thieving, murderous tribes, mischievous in themselves and abetted and encouraged in their evil propensities by the Government, in obedience to a policy which tends to enforce by terror an authority which it has become almost impossible to establish on wisdom. The praises due to the Turks are, above all things, inapplicable to the upper classes of Mussulmans, among whom the prevalence of all home and foreign vices, the absence of all religious conviction or moral restraint, and the corruption sown broadcast by the vile government have extinguished almost every sense of honour, truth, and justice.

When, therefore, a zealous Turkophile tells us that "in charity we should take, not the part of the Eastern Christians, but rather that of the poor uncomplaining Moslem who is robbed and starved in silence, we may agree with him in so far as to allow that misgovernment weighs equally hard on all classes of the Sultan's subjects; but it so happens that the Sultan is the head of Mussulman believers, the head of a Mussulman Government, and if any fault is to be found with that Government the blame must be imputed partly to the bad elements among the Mussulman population who wield the power, and partly also to the good elements which allow the bad ones so to exercise it. Some few of the

Christians, and not always the best among them, have, as we have seen, a share in the administration in a subordinate capacity; but, as a mass, the non-Mussulmans have hitherto had no voice in the Government, they were possibly not the only sufferers from its wrong-doings, but they were certainly not in any manner the accomplices of its iniquity. The Christians are a conquered race, and can, perhaps, hardly ever hope for a redress of their grievances except by an appeal to arms which should reverse the fortune of war, and give them the victory in their turn.

Leaving, however, the Turkophiles to uphold the cause of the Turks as they can, I shall give a few particulars with respect to the sufferings which the Christians have to endure at the Turks' hands, whether by the word "Turks" we are to understand the bad elements of the Mussulman population, or whether we refer all the evil to the Government which, in the main, springs from those elements, and seeks its strength in them. For that purpose I shall look into my recollections of the first winter I spent in Constantinople, and shall find there ample proofs that the disorders which came to a head in some of the provinces, and especially in Bulgaria, in May, 1876, are of ancient date, that a state of violence and oppression was there not the exception but the rule, and that, to use the expression of a recent writer, in those districts which have lately startled us by the atrocities there perpetrated, "a

stream of atrocities has at all times been flowing."

I found on my arrival, what I little suspected, a public press, both in the capital and in the provinces of Turkey, and, though it was grievously fettered, and subject to *Avertissemens*, *Communiqués*, and other vexations aping the pedantries of French censorship, it managed, thanks to the gross ignorance or careless oversight of the so-called *Bureau de la Presse*, to print authentic accounts of startling facts. A series of these interesting documents was collected and made public as an appendix to a pamphlet by M. Benoit Brunswik, entitled "La Turquie, ses Créanciers et la Diplomatie," at that time for sale in every bookshop in Pera, and to be seen lying on the tables of every club-room or inn-parlour. Had there been any exaggeration in these recitals, or had they been sheer inventions, it is difficult to conceive how the self-interest of an absolute Government or the zeal of its friends and champions could consent to their free publication and circulation without at least some attempt at meeting them with a positive denial. I can, however, conscientiously assert that paragraphs of the same nature as I here subjoin in a condensed form, were daily suffered to appear in all journals in the French, English, Greek, Turkish, Armenian and other languages perfectly unchallenged.

Take, in the first instance, the large, industrious, and comparatively inoffensive province of Bulgaria.

A letter from Eski-Zaghra, printed in the *Istochno Vrémé*, and reproduced in the *Courrier d'Orient*, tells us that at Sulmuchli, a village of that district :

"The Turks have broken into the houses of the Bulgarians, where they violated half a score of young girls and three young married women. They killed twelve Bulgarians and wounded eight; then, as they withdrew, they took away with them the corn, the lighter furniture, and all the portable property of the Christian inhabitants.

"In the village of Casanka, three hours and a half distant from Eski-Zaghra, the rural guard, with two zaptiehs, or policemen, and other Turks arrested fifteen Bulgarians, shut them up in a hut, and putting knives to their throats, extorted forty-six Turkish lire. In the district of Kezanlick, Koustchi Osman Agha, at the head of a band of Mussulmans, travelled from village to village, demanding money from the inhabitants and threatening them with arrest in case of refusal. He thus succeeded in securing a plunder of 560 lire. At Gurutché, while the villagers were away conveying goods to the station, the Mussulmans robbed their houses and ill-treated their defenceless women and children. At Koshidja, the Turks broke at night into the house of Hadji Todoro, a Bulgarian, tortured him with red-hot irons, and, after plundering him of 20,000 piastres, stabbed him with their knives. His son-in-law was cudgelled severely by them as they were leaving the house with the plunder.

"Robberies and murders are matters of frequent occurrence in the village of Terfikli. One of the inhabitants has been robbed of more than one hundred lire by the Kozaks. Two young peasants have been slain by Mussulman assassins. A priest has been robbed on the road between Souhlari and Kavakli; his wife has been violated in his presence, and himself stripped to the skin, his very beard being cut off from his face. The priests of the village of Kara-Tueikli were tied to a country-cart and dragged about all night, beaten and wounded, and were only released upon payment of twelve and a half lire each. The Bulgarian Bishop of Sliven was attacked in the town of Yamboli by thirty or forty Mussulmans, and though he was himself rescued by the police, his servants were subjected to the most severe ill-treatment. A boy of Kadikeui, fifteen years old, on his way to Sliven was stopped by some Turkish soldiers, who hewed him down with their knives; he was brought to the governor's house bleeding from the throat, and by him sent back to his village in a dying state without further inquiry. At Elkovo, five peasants going home from market, were attacked by the Turks, who demanded their money. One of them tried to escape, but was shot dead on the spot. The others saved their lives by delivering their purses."

The tortures by which money was extorted mainly consisted in burning the victims with red-hot irons, piercing their tongues with sharp daggers, compelling them to tread barefoot on heaps of thorns, etc.

"Sadick Bey, with some others, went from village to village violating Bulgarian girls. More than one hundred have been ravished."

I need not dwell at greater length on this painful subject. This misconduct of a large part of the Turkish population rests on the irrefragable evidence of many correspondents of the local journals, all stating the same incidents in different language, but with the same circumstantial accuracy, without eliciting the slightest answer or contradiction from the Government organs. The pretext for this outbreak of savage passions on the part of the Mussulmans during the months of October and November, 1875—that is, more than eight months before that abortive movement which led to what are emphatically called the "Atrocities in Bulgaria," and which may be said to have only been the paroxysm of a permanent, though chronic and only half-latent, disease—was an alleged conspiracy of the Christian peasantry, and the suspected existence of a revolutionary committee bent on favouring the Herzegovinian revolt. Thus at Deirmen-Déré "the Mussulmans were besieging the village church, where the scared population had taken refuge from their outrages. A company of one hundred soldiers was sent to the rescue, and on the officer asking the rioters what they were doing there, they gave answer, 'We are waiting for the revolutionary committee who are shut up there.' The officer then ordered the church door to be thrown open and the

peasants to come forth. A crowd of terrified women and children filed out. 'Are these your committeemen?' asked the officer; and for once the rioters were balked of their prey." It was not often, however, that timely aid was afforded to the persecuted Bulgarians. The governors in many instances declared that they could do nothing for their protection. Not unfrequently the minor authorities, the troops, and their officers, and especially the police, were the worst persecutors, and did their utmost to kindle the fanaticism of the native Mussulmans, and of Kozack, Circassian, and other savage immigrants, goading them on to the destruction of their Christian fellow-subjects.

"The Caimakan of Seni Zagra, with his 200 soldiers, refuses to move to the rescue of the plundered villages. The Cadi of Eski-Zagra is the abettor of the worst offenders. Two of the wealthy Mussulmans of this district, Emine-Bey and Hadji-Tahir-Agha, are the terror of the Christians, and the Caimakan says 'he can do nothing against such personages.' Those two worthies have an object in scaring away the defenceless peasantry, as in their absence they seize upon the land and establish their right of possession both to the fields and the crops."

The alleged impotence of the Caimakan against those two overbearing villains reminds me of the answer given by the Minister of Justice to a foreign Diplomatist of high rank. The latter asked that

justice should be done to a Frank under his protection to whom a Pasha owed several hundred lire. "What means have I," said the Minister, "to compel a Pasha to payment?" "Why," answered the foreign Envoy, "in my country such a man would either be imprisoned or his property would be seized, no matter what his rank might be." Whereupon the Minister observed with a quiet smile, "Ah! civilisation has not yet reached so far in this country."

In very many cases, however, the men in authority, not only through want of power or goodwill, wink at the deeds of violence and bloodshed of which the Christians are the victims, but they are themselves zealous instigators of the worst outrages.

"The Caimakan of Matschin arrested some peasants of Tcherna because they refused to execute some compulsory work he exacted from them. The poor peasants proved that they had done their own share of the *corvée;* but he insisted they should also do the share of their Mussulman fellow-subjects, and fined them severely for what he called their resistance to the authorities. And the Caimakan of Babadag endeavoured to appeal to the evil passions of the people of the Turkish village of Akkadine, telling them the *Giaour* was coming to submit them to slavery; and, as he made no impression on those poor boors, he enlisted some Circassians, organising seventy of them into a squadron of cavalry and

bidding them get their horses from the Christians, killing any one who might refuse to give them up on the first summons."

But the worst agents of the Government are the *Zaptiehs*, or policemen, who quarter themselves on the Christian population, and abandon themselves to the worst excesses, compelling the women to hide themselves from their persecution.

Your thorough-going Philo-Turk will contend that Christians can sit as magistrates and governors, and command fleets and armies: witness Hobart Pasha, Captain Wood, and others. No doubt the Ottoman Government has had and has occasion for the services of "men of energy and knowledge," and must take them wherever it finds them, just as it employs English engineers for its steamers and railway locomotives. No doubt, also, the experiment of Christians as governors of provinces or magistrates has been tried; but that the trial has not succeeded, or not been persevered in, one might gather from the Imperial Firman of Reforms of December, 1875, as well as by all other preceding and following acts, all of which equally proclaim *la carrière ouverte aux talents*—the opening of all public offices to deserving subjects, whatever may be their religion or nationality. And with a *naïveté* which is quite characteristic of him, the Sultan in a long interview he had with an Ambassador, stated that he was ignorant of the extent to which the provisions of the Hatt-i-Humayoun had been disregarded, and that he was

not aware that the Christians suffered from any disabilities, or were subjected to ill-treatment. He ascribed all these disorders to the administration, just as he charged his Finance Minister with all the shortcomings of the Imperial Treasury!

The same complaints that came to us from Bulgaria in that same autumn of 1875, reached us equally from Thessaly, where the authorities crushed the people by their endless requisitions for the army; and also from Armenia, where the extortions of the tax-gatherers ground the people with unprecedented severity. "The tithes in some districts," we were told, "have risen to 20 per cent., and where the Mussulmans are unable or unwilling to pay, the rest of the community—*i.e.* the non-Mussulmans—are called upon to make up for the defaulters." In the Government's anxiety to scrape up the money for the half-coupon due in January, the tax-gatherers had been suffered or directed to set aside the Imperial Firman which abolished the additional fourth imposed upon the tithes, and which some instances remitted the arrears of taxes. Twenty years' arrears, long since remitted, were demanded in some localities in Armenia. A letter from Erzeroum of the 10th of December 1875, printed in the *Turquie* of the same month, informed us that "the villagers come to town with flour, wood, hay, and all the produce which they hoped to turn into money, by which they may meet the tax-gatherer's incessant demands, and no sooner are their country carts empty than the zaptiehs pounce upon them and

take possession in the name of the Government. driving the owners away with their cudgels. In less miserable districts the taxes are collected in advance. A gentleman of French extraction, well known and respected here, who owns a country-seat at Kandilli, on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, "has been made to pay the land-tax two years in advance, the local authorities refusing him the necessary permission to repair a fencing wall that had fallen till he had paid to the uttermost farthing."

Even in the provinces of Asia Minor, which were stricken by that famine of 1873-4, the accounts of which shocked all Europe and appealed to the charity both of English and Americans, the wretched people were made to pay a tithe of 12½ per cent., as well as the arrears of taxes, in contempt of the Sultan's Firman, who wished to "temper the wind to the shorn lamb." I read at the time in a letter from Cesarea that "both tithes and taxes are sold out to contractors, who naturally take no heed of the Firman, and observe, with some reason, that the Sultan has no right to be generous at their expense. . . The Vali, or Governor, sends word to the Mussetariffs, his subordinates, that unless he forwards a certain amount within a specific time, he will be deposed;" hence the screw was put on without mercy.

And in a private letter from Erzeroum which a friend lays before me I read:

"The horrors, the cruelties, the roguery of officials

one sees in the provinces are sickening, even at this moment, when one would suppose the Mussulman would be on his good behaviour to save the empire. One would say the Turks are acting on the *sauve qui peut* pressure of despair. Instead of 12½ per cent. tithe, they are taking on some articles 20 to 50 per cent. In two cases I had to expostulate with the Vali. In one the demand of the collectors was at the rate of some 60 or more per cent. They demanded 12½ per cent. on hay, fixing the value at 168 piastres a measure, when the value in the town where it was sold was only 50. Thus the tax was over 42 per cent. The case was so glaring that the Pasha was obliged to step in. But in rural districts away from here the Vali's interference could not avail. There the tithe-collectors have been levying 32⅛ per cent. on hay. In the district of Ismir the Christians are at this moment being robbed of everything they have by the Government, by bands of armed deserters, and by organised bands of brigand traders. The Government takes taxes in excess; the deserters levy blackmail, and the armed traders force their goods on the villagers at three, four, and five times their value."

And again in the same letter: "An Armenian preacher in one of the monasteries of the city of Bitlis (province of Erzeroum) was severely wounded by robbers, whom he recognised and denounced to the Caïmacan, or Lieutenant-Governor, but the latter made no attempt to arrest or punish the criminals.

An aged Armenian, while returning from the market-place in Bitlis, was attacked by four Turks and nearly cut to pieces. An Armenian muleteer was stabbed in the abdomen, and died on the spot, and that at the very gates of the Caïmacan's palace. These occurrences were all reported to the Government officials, but these made no attempt to punish the guilty parties."

In many cases the Caïmacan himself is the worst offender :

"The cruel and sensual Caïmacan of Boolanic compelled twenty-five young Armenian women to enter his harem. For this the outraged villagers made complaint to the Governor-General at Erzeroum. The charge was proved against the Caïmacan, and sentence was passed upon him, but he escaped from punishment by means of bribes, and was soon restored to office. The Caïmacan of the village of Chookhoova is of the like character."

One of Armenia's greatest scourges is that of the incursions of the Koords, utterly lawless savages, who rob and burn the houses and barns, and murder the inhabitants on the least attempt at resistance :

"In the district of Akhlaat the Koords plundered an Armenian village and carried off all the domestic animals. A few days ago a similar attack was made on an Armenian village on the plain of Moosh, and in the fruitless endeavours of the villagers to recapture their cattle, one of the men was killed. A father and son while peacefully at work in the field,

were attacked, stripped naked, and nearly hacked to pieces," etc.

I could multiply the quotations to the end of time, and I assure you I suppress the most startling cases, because they seem to myself hardly credible. The letter concludes :

" Up to this date some 350 Armenians have professed to become Mussulmans, with the hope that, under the cloak of Mohammedanism, they may secure a little freedom from the cruel insults, outrages, beatings, and oppressions of Turks and Koords."

I repeat that no one can be blind to those noble features in their character by which the Osmanli race were enabled to assert and maintain for several centuries their sway over a large portion of Europe and Asia. One may sum up all eulogy of the Turks by allowing that they are a brave race of men. But owing to the very nature of their conquest, they have learnt to look upon the Christians as a conquered, a subject, and in a great measure, a debased and despised race. They have not often willingly oppressed them ; they have in many instances been anxious to treat them well and protect them in the same manner and on the same principle that a well-constituted, humane man will for his own interest be merciful and considerate to his cattle ; but it has never been, and it will perhaps never be, an easy task to bring them to live with the Christians on a footing of equality. The consciousness of superiority originally founded on the right of

the strongest will not at any time be obliterated. The ruling race will never amalgamate with the subject people. Extortion, oppression, injustice, no doubt fall on Mussulmans and Christians, but rather more on the Christians—at least, on those remote rural Christians to whom the interference of strong-fisted European consuls does not extend. To make the rapacity and venality of all functionaries, to which they were perhaps inclined, a matter of necessity, the wretched inadequacy of their salaries has powerfully contributed. The greatest scourges of the country throughout its extent are the police—those zaptiehs, whose name was corrupted into zaffi in old Venice to designate something lower and more villanous than even sbirri. The zaptiehs have up to this day all been Mussulmans. We are told that they will now be appointed without any distinction as to religion. But doubtless there are Christian as well as Mohammedan rogues. And how can a man be aught else than a rogue who must manage to live on thirty piastres (five shillings) a month? Many of the magistrates are proportionately not much better off. Assurance is given that the pay of all these people is to be raised. It is to be hoped that, higher or lower, the pay may at least be forthcoming with better punctuality. As a very general rule, the salaries of officers of high rank in the army, heads of departments even here in the capital, are often ten months in arrear. In the provinces many have seen no Government coin for

nearly two years. Is it to be wondered at if they help themselves as they best can? If the Sultan's creditors are not paid, they may console themselves with the reflection that he pays nobody else.

But after thus having conscientiously dwelt on the best, and freely exposed the worst qualities of the Turks, I must say that it was with little patience one read some mawkish, morbid effusions in their praise, published by a London evening paper, in December, 1875, and bearing the evidently false date of Constantinople. Those "Turkish letters" were, of course, eagerly reproduced by all the newspapers in Turkey, and were read by the Philo-Turks with delight, not unmixed with a great deal of amazement. The good Mussulmans themselves had never suspected what marvellous patterns of cleanliness, politeness, temperance, and all other virtues they might in the estimation of a sane, as well as accomplished, and intelligent stranger, be held to be. They were aware, of course, that polygamy, though sanctioned by the Mosaic and Mohammedan codes, is on the wane among them. But they did not for all that take credit to themselves. The Turks are simply poorer than they were, and find a household of wives too expensive a luxury. Many a poor-spirited bachelor among the Christians on the same ground denies himself the blessing of a solitary partner. What opportunities the writer of those "Turkish letters" may have had of prying into the mysteries of a Moslem harem I know not,

but I saw no such glass-houses as he describes in Turkey, in town or country, no genial residences the tenants of which seem anxious "to be seen by every one every hour of the day," no habitation on the lintel of which the inscription "*Nil fœdum hæc limina tangat*" may be read by the passer-by. I see plain, unsightly buildings, looking to my eyes like gloomy prisons, with thick blinds drawn close across the windows, and tall walls around their gardens; enchanted castles with gardens in the charge of black slaves guarding the entrance against intruders. The distinguished Osmanlis I have seen in some of them are certainly well-bred and consummately courteous gentlemen, and the apartments in which strangers are received seem carefully swept, scoured, and white-washed. But that is about all. To the cleanly habits of a few persons of high rank, as a general rule, one may be perfectly willing to bear witness; but with respect to the ablutions prescribed to every good Mussulman by the Prophet's precept or practice, and described as "more frequent than those of any other people, and to be performed not in stagnant but in running water," the least one says about it, I think, will be the soonest mended. Religion proposes, but Nature disposes. All the running waters of the currents of the Bosphorus would not have power to cleanse the unwashed faces of Turks, Greeks, Jews, Armenians, and other Orientals one meets throughout the length and width of Pera and Stamboul, and nothing is more astonishing than the

knack devotees exhibit in the performance of their purifying rites at the fountain in front of the mosque, dipping their fingers and toes in the cool element as if it were hissing hot, and contriving to part with as little of their beloved dirt as if in it were the essence of their holiness. The Turks, undoubtedly, manage to harbour mother and daughter-in-law under the same roof, and their children have all the demureness without the bright colours, the chubby smile, and the nameless graces that French toy-makers know how to impart to mere wax dolls; but those are general Southern, and not merely Mussulman peculiarities. The nursery is not a Turkish any more than a Greek, or, alas! an Italian or French institution. Those too wise-looking, old-looking infant prodigies are simply the result of a sickly growth and stunted hot-house training; and men are no better men for never having known what childhood, boyhood, or early youth ought to be. A Turk, it is true, is free from the "abomination of shaking hands." But I cannot see why his *temenah*, the whisking away the flies from his face, with which he greets an acquaintance, should be considered a less hypocritical form of salutation than the common Christian, or at least English practice, of making a pump-handle of a friend's arm. The cordiality with which one is sometimes compelled among us to treat a person for whom one may entertain no affection is not more "conventional" or hypocritical than the demonstration of respect a Mussulman shows to a

person for whom in his heart he may harbour the most unqualified contempt. They are all social usages to be taken for what they are worth, and it is not easy to live in the world without our outward manner having in some measure to do violence to our inner feelings. There certainly are Mussulman as well as Christian hands one would rather not touch without a glove, and even with one, hoping all the time as one thinks of the dirt that it will not, as the Italians say of love—"go through the kid."

CHAPTER XIII.

TURKISH FINANCES.

TURKISH BOND-HOLDERS.—THEIR AGENTS.—THE FIRMAN OF OCTOBER.—TURKISH BUDGETS.—THE CIVIL LIST.—TURKISH AND EUROPEAN NEGOTIATIONS.—THE SULTAN'S EXTRAVAGANCE.—HIS ILLNESS.—THE HARD-BOILED EGGS.—ALL FOOLS' DAY.—EXEUNT THE BOND-HOLDERS' AGENTS.—MR. HAMOND'S FAMOUS SNUFF-BOX.

I DO not know to what extent paradoxical writers of olden times have exhausted the subject of "the pleasures and advantages of being in debt." There must certainly be a great comfort in the consciousness of the strong interest our friends the creditors take in the preservation of our precious existence and in the promotion of our welfare; something touching, also, in the certainty that the remembrance of us will be kept green in their minds when we are no more, and when the world would otherwise dismiss us from its thoughts; our liabilities too generally surviving any posthumous honours that might be paid to the memory of our good deeds. Whatever may be thought of the benevolent policy evinced on behalf of the Turkish Empire by politicians, diplomatists, framers of Andrassy notes, and Berlin Memorandums, there is no doubt the heartiest well-wishers

to the Ottoman Empire and its Government ought to be the holders of Ottoman bonds. The Ministers of the Porte show their sense of the titles their various visitors have to their gratitude by awarding only a jewelled gold bracelet, worth £200, as an acknowledgment of a gifted lady's "sympathies," while they remunerate the "good intentions" of a representative of the bond-holders with a jewelled gold snuff-box of the value of £500. "*Vivent nos amis les ennemis!*" debtors may say, and there can be no foe whom it may better be worth our while to propitiate than a dun who comes to us, not so much to remind us of our obligations as to show how easy it is for us to acquit ourselves of them, either by putting off the "evil quarter of an hour," or by diminishing its horrors so as in every respect to consult our own convenience. Of these well-meaning and considerate gentlemen who went to Constantinople regardless of the hardships of a winter journey, the number soon began to be pretty strong, and their presence, if it had no other effect, must have been cheering to the managers of the Hôtel d'Angleterre, where they put up—an establishment which its former head, the well-known Missirie, Eothen's dragoman, now somewhat under a cloud, had left to look for better employment and for more benignant stars on the banks of the Nile.

The first of these humane doctors who, aware that the Sick Man's complaint, like that of the late Theodore Hook, lay in "the chest," travelled to Turkey, confident of the soundness of their various

methods of cure, was Mr. Hamond, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Close upon his track we had two young gentlemen fresh from the Cornhill and Lombard Street hospitals—the Messrs. Palmer—bent apparently on the application of a local and special treatment. Next followed, as consulting physicians, Sir Philip Rose and Mr. John Staniforth, and afterwards there appeared a pupil of the French *Ecole de Médecine,* of Rue Vivienne, Count Dumanoir—acting as *alter ego* of one of the magnates of that far-famed Parisian institution, M. Bourée. Last of the number, and in a more genial season, the Hon. Randolph Stewart, and Mr. McEwen tried their hands where others had failed.

Of the disease itself the diagnosis is by no means difficult. The Ottoman Empire, with a constitution seriously damaged by habitual intemperance and frequent spasmodic attacks, contracted a consolidated debt calculated, in round numbers, at £200,000,000 involving an annual charge of £14,000,000 ; and it laboured, besides, under the burden of a floating debt, which may amount to £12,000,000, or, say, perhaps, £20,000,000. The Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Pasha, hoping to rid himself of his most pressing difficulties, ventured, on the 5th of October last, upon a partial repudiation of the debt, signifying to his creditors that the interest of their bonds should, for the next five years, be paid half in gold and the other half in paper bearing five per cent. interest. We all know how even this part of the engagement was fulfilled.

The Government of the Porte was said to be straining every nerve to pay the half coupons falling due at the beginning of the half-year, but broke down at an early period of the attempt.

The men bent on bearing out the Turks in all their misdeeds, endeavoured to palliate the dishonesty of the Grand Vizier's repudiating Firman by asserting that it had been put forth at the suggestion of General Ignatieff, and that it was part of the treacherous scheme by which the wily Russian contrived to throw discredit on the Ottoman Government, and to compromise it before public opinion in England; but without going so far as to deny Russia's interference in this matter, it must be allowed that both Her Majesty's Government and Sir Henry Elliot, their representative, did all they could to encourage Mahmoud Nedim in his evil courses by proclaiming with unnecessary hurry, and in the most emphatic manner, that they would abstain from all interference in behalf of the bond-holders, even throwing out some hints as to the unfair advantage at which the negotiators of the various Turkish loans had, in its most distressing circumstances, taken the Government of the Porte, that the creditors ought to consider themselves in some degree repaid for their capital by the heavy rate of interest on which they had invested their money, and which they had enjoyed year after year, and finally that it would be inhuman, as well as impolitic, on their part, to put any pressure on the Porte at a moment in which it

had an open civil war, and a wide-spread secret conspiracy to contend with. I remember that, at the time, Alekos Bey, Prince Vogorides, now Alekos Pasha, Ottoman Ambassador at the Court of Vienna, who honoured me with very frequent visits, and was at the time out of office, and therefore a violent opponent of the Sultan's Government, inveighed in no measured terms against Lord Derby and his colleagues, branding them as "cowards and traitors to the interests of English subjects, whom they suffered to be defrauded to the amount of many millions of money."

It is important to observe that when the Grand Vizier, in October last, chose to alter the terms which bound the Porte to its creditors, he seemed to consider himself entitled to submit all of them to one and the same treatment, ignoring the fact that some of the bond-holders stood on safer ground than others. The loans of 1854, '55, and '71 were contracted upon the express stipulation that the Egyptian tribute should, by an order of the Sultan to the Khedive, be paid into the Banks of England and France, and by these banks be distributed among the bond-holders upon an order from the Diplomatic Representatives of the Porte in London and Paris. The Ottoman Government could not, therefore, divert the Egyptian tribute to any other purpose, unless it had in hand some other security equally satisfactory, to the holders of these three special loans. The bondholders of 1855 had, besides, a guarantee from the English and

French Governments for their payment; but it was clear that England and France would not think of fulfilling their obligations till they saw the reason why Turkey herself did not accomplish hers. The loans of the three above-mentioned years were contracted at a reasonably high issue price, and bore a comparatively moderate rate of interest, and they were placed, therefore, in very different conditions from the other loans, to which more advantageous terms were allowed, and the payment of which was only vaguely guaranteed on tobacco, salt, and other taxes and duties, or still more indefinitely, on the general revenue of the Empire. But the three materially and specially guaranteed loans only amounted altogether to £13,700,000, a small fraction of the general bulk of Turkish liabilities; while that of 1855, the one loan which depended for repayment on something besides the goodwill and power to pay of the Ottoman Government—*i.e.* on the pledges of the English and French Governments—was only £5,000,000.

The agents who were from time to time attempting to treat with the Government of the Porte for better terms than those imposed by the decree of the 5th of October, were some of them connected with the bond-holders of the three guaranteed loans; others were simply acting as protectors of the interests of those three loans, while others, again, were in opposition to the said loans, and encouraged the Grand Vizier in his declaration that Turkey had encountered the same *moral* obligations with all her

creditors, and that, whatever might be the *legal* terms of each individual contract, she would impartially fulfil her engagements to them all; *i.e.* she would equally pay everybody, if, and when, she was in a position to do so, the inference very plainly being that, till then, she would pay nobody.

The astute old Grand Vizier, and the no less crafty Minister of Finance, Yoossooff Pasha, managed these various representatives of the bondholders with consummate skill. They received them with every show of Oriental courtesy and politeness; treated them to their choicest coffee and most exquisite cigarettes, listened to them with grave deference, raised their eyebrows and clasped their hands with well-acted admiration of the flow of their eloquence and of the lucidity of their arguments, declared themselves fully satisfied and convinced, and were liberal of the largest, but at the same time the most guarded and vaguest promises; but invariably ended with their *bakaloom*, or "we shall see," showed them to the door, took care not to be at home to them, or in their office, as long as they and their valets and porters could contrive to put them off the scent, drove them mad by a well-contrived system of subterfuge and procrastination, and meanwhile exerted their ingenuity to raise the mutual jealousy of the holders of the various loans and of their agents, and to set them by the ears, holding to the men in Constantinople an ambiguous language, upon which their ambassadors in Paris and London either could

put no construction, or only such interpretation as best suited the Government's purposes. It is by such shifts and devices, by endless delays, mystifications and tergiversations, that Turkish negotiators nowadays manage to conduct all affairs from the weightiest to the most trifling. The meanest and dirtiest tricks of the stall-keepers at the Stamboul bazaars are nothing to the arts of the political or diplomatic functionaries at the Porte, and I defy any man who has ever had to deal with them to contradict me if he can.

"It is agreed by almost all reasonable men," said the Turks, "that the Grand Vizier, although he acted with unnecessary rashness and bluntness, yielded in October to an irresistible necessity, and put forth as reasonable and equitable a measure as circumstances allowed. He could not pay the whole interest of his debt—he engaged to pay half. He did not stop to consider the various claims of his creditors; he did not inquire which of them had taken a more unsparing advantage of Turkey's extremities. They had all of them driven a more or less profitable bargain; they could and should, all of them, bear a partial sacrifice. If any new arrangement could be devised by which that sacrifice might be lightened or which might more equitably apportion it in consideration of their various claims, he would, doubtless, gladly listen to such a proposal; but the proposal must be made in the name and with the consent of a sufficient majority of Turkey's

creditors, for the Grand Vizier's own decree was meant to be and it undeniably was based on equitable general principles, however it might exceed the Government's powers, or trespass on the individual rights of some of the interested parties. The Grand Vizier came to what seemed to him, and what cannot in the circumstances be denied to have been, a fair, however clumsy, settlement with his creditors. If they could agree among themselves to a better settlement, his consent to it, within the limits of his abilities, would not be withheld. But the agreement must be spontaneous and general, because, although the obligations by which Turkey was bound to her creditors were of a different nature, the claim on her honour was the same, and better results could be hoped from a frank appeal to what a Mussulman will acknowledge as his pledged word than from any argument founded on what he will consider mere legal quibble and chicane."

It was not difficult, upon these premises, to foresee what might and must be the upshot of any scheme aiming at a revision of the compact by which Turkey, in October, bound herself to her creditors. The matter must be decided, not in Constantinople, but in London, Paris, Rome, Amsterdam, or in any place where all the holders of Ottoman Bonds might come to a common understanding of what they deemed a fair settlement of their claims, subject, of course, to the modification those claims have undergone in consequence of the October decree. Was

there any possibility of the bond-holders coming to such an agreement? Should we ever see in Constantinople any agent entitled to consider himself the *bonâ fide* representative of the majority of the bond-holders, able to show the credentials qualifying him for the discharge of his mission, so thoroughly conversant with the matter he had in hand, so deeply penetrated with the thought of the general interest, and so little biased by partial or special objects as to enable him, as creditor, to meet the Grand Vizier, as debtor, on a footing of perfectly equal authority?

It was only too evident to all disinterested persons that the creditors of Turkey, if they could have been brought to act as one man, would have constituted as great a power as the combined diplomacy of the European States, and that their representatives, if properly accredited, would have been able to exercise on the Porte, not only for financial, but also for political objects, as strong and decisive a pressure as was put by the Ambassadors of the six Powers who presented or endorsed the famous Andrassy Note. Indeed, the bond-holders bear more intimate relations to the Ottoman Government, and are therefore entitled to a more thorough knowledge of its home policy and to a more active inquiry into its administration, than the Governments on which they respectively depend; for, by virtue of their share of the public debt, they have in some measure a right to consider themselves Ottoman subjects and proprietors, and every act of the Government affects

their interests as directly as those of any Ottoman landowner, labourer, or trader.

Could a deputation of unanimous, or at least not implacably discordant, bond-holders, whether or not introduced or backed by the representatives of their respective States, have obtained admission into the Sultan's presence, and given him to understand that by not putting any limits to his exorbitant civil list, by freely laying hands on any sum of money coming within his reach, he not only inflicted the utmost misery and sowed the most dangerous discontent among his own subjects, but also defrauded creditors who proved to be his best friends in his sorest need, and who were mainly instrumental in rescuing him from the worst embarrassments, it is by no means unlikely that some impression could have been made on a Sovereign whose chief offence was the result of gross ignorance, and with whom it was a favourite saying that "he could not see what was the use of his Ministers, unless it was to procure him money." If there was a point upon which everybody in Constantinople was agreed, it was this, that any reform which might lead to good results in Turkey must begin with the Sultan, and that the Sultan, in spite of all his defects, would not be unamenable to reason or necessity if the man could be found, either among his own Pashas or among foreign Ambassadors, who would undertake to exercise sufficient pressure upon him." Would and could some heroic deputation of

Ottoman bond-holders kindly take that somewhat ticklish operation upon itself?

Till a steady and vigorous curb can be put upon the whims and passions of the Sovereign, the situation of the Ottoman Empire must always be precarious, and there is no absurdity or iniquity to which the private advisers of Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz would have hesitated to urge him. Any attempt to establish a check upon the exercise of the Sultan's arbitrary power, either by a native Council or Cabinet, would have been utterly hopeless, for, on the one hand, the highest in the land never approached their Padishah except in an attitude of the most abject physical and mental prostration; and, on the other hand, whenever the Sultan was bent on mischief, he was never at a loss for willing instruments to work out his purpose. The same servile dependence exhibited by Viziers and Pashas when standing in the presence of their dread liege was equally evinced by the Christian notabilities when they were summoned by their Mussulman rulers in any measure to share their authority and to enlighten them in the management of public affairs. The Rayah, Greek, Armenian, or other Giaour, when admitted into Council with his Moslem fellow-subject, behaves as if he scarcely considered himself entitled to the breath that is in his body. He sits upon the extreme edge of his chair, bolt upright as a boarding-school young lady, with both hands between his legs, holding both hems of his gabardine, "in the attitude," as an Ambassador

was saying to me one morning, "of a *Venus pudique*," simpering and mincing his words, and nodding assent to whatever the men of the ruling race may have to propose. For his own part, the proud Mussulman, who shows so much testiness and stubbornness when dealing with the Christian, never approaches his Imperial master without abdicating all his faculties of thinking, judging and deciding for himself. Every word from the Sovereign's lips is met with a dumb but profound obeisance, implying that "to hear is to obey."

To look to such elements for the construction of an independent Council or a responsible Cabinet would be egregious folly. There will never be a limitation to the arbitrary and mischievous power of the Sultan until a strong pressure is brought to bear upon it from without—until his Government is made to acknowledge and to bow to the influence of well-meaning foreign Powers. That is what the representatives of the European States ought to have felt. They should have seen that, as they could not agree on some plausible solution of the Eastern Question, and as they were all interested in the adjournment of that solution, they should have turned all their joint efforts to support the Ottoman Government by imposing upon it the only policy which, in their opinion, might have prolonged its existence. To bring the Ambassadors and Ministers here assembled to work heartily together to any purpose was, however, no easy task;

and the conviction is strong in my mind, that if there ever was a case in which men who are paid to promote and maintain peace contrived to bring about war, it was that of their Excellencies the Envoys ordinary and extraordinary who represented the European Powers at Constantinople during my stay.

The Representatives of foreign Powers are not able to obtain from the Porte justice even on behalf of their respective subjects. In February, 1876, about sixty English working-men—smiths, boiler-makers, shipbuilders, engineers, etc.—all living at Hasskeui, and employed by the Government in the Naval Arsenal there, applied to her Majesty's Cousul-General, Sir Philip Francis, for advice. The whole of their colony, they said, consisting of above ninety families, had been for the last five months vainly applying for their wages. Their arrears had been promised to them ever so many times, but the promises only led to repeated disappointments. Sir Philip Francis hardly seemed to see how he could help the poor fellows. Of course he and his Ambassador could address the Government of the Porte in their behalf; but what if they were met with the answer, "*Nemo dat quod non habet?*" Claims of money due, complaints of justice denied or unconscionably delayed, are showered daily on the tables of Diplomatic and Consular Agents of all nations here; but who can boast of obtaining any attention, to say nothing of redress, at the Porte? What

answer is ever vouchsafed except the most provokingly dilatory and evasive one? In their stolid *vis inertiæ* the Turks are invincible. Recollect that French subject who, as I said, was ejected from his house by a mob led by a magistrate and a priest, illtreated by the police, imprisoned for a whole day with his family, and subjected to the greatest indignation, here in Pera, within sight, as it were, of his Ambassador's palace. What redress or damages has his Ambassador been able to exact for him? What has he been able to achieve towards restoring the homeless family to the possession of their house, or having damages allowed to them for their broken furniture? But if, with all the intervention of their Diplomatic and Consular Agents, Europeans here in Pera fare no better, how can the unprotected subjects of the Porte, whether Moslems or Rayahs, ever hope to come by their own? What security will they have that they shall not be made to bear more than their share of the public burdens, or with what confidence can they apply to their magistrates or to any of their rulers for justice?

As I think I have often observed, not only is Turkey not a country in which an improvement in the administration may lead to a relief of financial difficulty, but the distress of the finance must, at least for a time, be aggravated by any practicable attempt at reform. A reform would imply both a falling off in the revenue—the result of a reduction

or remission of some of the taxes—and an increase of the expenditure—a consequence of the necessity of bettering the character of the public functionaries by allowing them more liberal salaries. There is no force in the world that could compel Turkey to keep to her engagements if she was actually unable to fulfil them; but her creditors might so mismanage their affairs as to make her unwilling to pay her debts even to the extent of her ability. The cause of the Turkish bond-holders was abandoned by their respective Governments, and it was further weakened by dissension and wrangling among themselves. By a good understanding and wise combination of their forces the creditors of Turkey might, perhaps, have become a power in themselves, but the discord and disorganisation to which their meetings almost invariably led, revealed most emphatically their incapacity for united action, and satisfied the Government of the Porte as to the perfect freedom it might adopt towards them in its future course. The Government of the Porte, with a revenue which, after deducting the two and a half addition to the tithe, the abolition of which was lately decreed, may be fairly estimated at 22,103,300 Turkish lire (the lira equal to 18s. 2d.), found it impossible to allow the bond-holders to receive the £T.14,000,000 due to them as the interest of the Consolidated Debt. By the Iradé of October, as I said, it was decreed that only half that sum, or £T.7,000,000, should be paid. I have known some friendly advisers of Turkey,

English gentlemen among others, who strongly advised the Government of the Sublime Porte to break even from the engagement contracted in October, and to pay nothing at all, their argument being that their first duty was to their own people, and their most immediate task that of setting their house in order, for which the whole of their revenue would prove no more than sufficient. I will not undertake to say whether the Ottoman Government took the friendly hint from the beginning; I do not know to what extent that kind advice to cancel all debts by a scratch of the pen coincided with the Government's original intentions. But all that is clear is that such has hitherto been, such is likely to the end of time to be the result. The Turks will show their impartiality to their creditors by paying nobody.

Some hope of a possible restoration of the finance, as well as of a cure of all the evils of Turkey, began to be entertained in the early part of the spring of 1876, when Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz was reported to be ill. As I stated on good authority, he had eaten eighteen eggs at breakfast—an excess which had naturally disagreed with him. The indigestion and colic from which he was suffering were aggravated, as I also said, by boils, one of which, presenting all the symptoms of a carbuncle, had to be cut open by the surgeon, Omer Pasha. On a Friday in February, his Majesty, who is both Sovereign and Pontiff, was expected, as usual, to give his subjects the example of

a punctilious observance of his religious duties by going in state to one of the mosques, where, after prayer, all the grand dignitaries and functionaries of the empire perform their weekly obeisance, or *selamlik*. For more than a hundred years, I am told, there has been no instance of the "Shadow of God" failing in the performance of this imposing ceremony, though some of the Sultans were in some cases so ill that they had to be carried to the place of worship in a blanket; his Majesty's brother and immediate predecessor, Abd-ul-Medjid, was seen at his mosque only two days before he died. It will be easy to imagine the sensation produced at Stamboul and Pera on that February day towards noon, when no report of the cannon announcing that the Sultan was proceeding to the mosque was heard, and when it became known that the Pashas, who are regularly informed of the particular mosque where they are expected to attend, had on that day received no message. All that was positively known was that the Sultan remained for three days shut up in the harem, invisible to all persons, the Grand Vizier vainly dancing attendance in the antechamber. The most ominous rumours were spread as to the possible gravity of the Padishah's illness, and speculation was afloat as to what people might be looking forward to, "should things come to the worst." People considered that the Sultan spent yearly from £T.4,500,000 to £T.5,000,000. And that as no means had hitherto been found to compel

him to keep within the limits of any civil list, some sanguine conjectures as to the beneficial change a new reign might usher in were, therefore, extremely natural, and the immediate expectation was that relief might be afforded to the distressed finance of the empire by laying hands on the £T.4,000,000 in gold and £T.8,000,000 in Ottoman Bonds the ailing Sultan was supposed to be hoarding, to say nothing of £T.500,000 in jewels it was said he owned as private property, apart from the Crown jewels treasured up at the Seraglio. Hopes were also entertained that the new Sovereign, aware of the serious crisis through which the empire was passing, might not be indisposed to yield either to the respectful solicitations of well-meaning native advisers, or to the friendly suggestions of the Representatives of the European Powers, so as partly to divest himself of that absolute and arbitrary authority wherein lay the main evil of the country, and to inaugurate that true era of reform which, to be of any avail, must begin with the head of the State.

It would, meanwhile, have done his Majesty infinite good if he had heard in what mood the immense majority of his subjects received the news of his supposed danger. A good Mussulman said in my hearing, "Le Sultan est malade—la Turquie est en convalescence; le Sultan meurt—la Turquie est sauvée." And when the *Bassiret* explained on the Saturday that his Majesty, "*à cause d'un*

furoncle, found it difficult to put on his uniform," giving that as a reason for his non-attendance at mosque, the pithy remark was, "The Sultan is better, worse luck!" To such a depth of unpopularity a Sovereign had sunk with respect to whose character the brightest anticipations were cherished at his accession, and who in his progress through Western Europe was hailed as "the Man of his Age." It soon became evident, however, that it would take something stronger than boils to kill Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz. He lived through half the year, and continued to the end to lay hand on whatever public money came within his reach.

A decree of the Grand Vizier, intended to reassure the Turkish bond-holders of, at least, that half of their dividends which was allowed them by the Iradé of the 6th of October, had placed the whole revenue arising from the indirect taxes at their disposal, ordering that the proceeds therefrom should be paid into the Imperial Ottoman Bank, and empowering the Bank to exercise the strictest control over the Custom House. What happened? I was informed by a Broussa correspondent of the highest respectability that "a quantity of embroidered work, such as table-covers, etc., was ordered some weeks ago there for the *Palace*," and that "an order had been given for the payment of £T.15,000 on the *Mizam*, or Custom House." There is a branch of the Ottoman Bank in that city, which was supposed,

notwithstanding, to receive all the produce of the indirect taxes.

Nay, the Imperial brute went so far as to seize £90,000 on board a transport ship bound for the Bocche di Cattaro, taking thus violent possession of money which had been scraped together with the greatest difficulty, and which was destined to relieve the most immediate wants of the brave and devoted army of the Porte in Herzegovina, an army which was much more formidably mown down by hunger and privations of every kind than by the sword of the insurgents! With all these instances of his insatiable rapacity, which could be multiplied to infinity, the Sultan was, or seemed at least to be, always penniless, for so appalling was the distress under which the Ottoman treasury was labouring, that even the monthly payment of the Sultan's civil list had fallen in arrear, and the purveyor who supplied his Majesty's household with flour was begged or bidden to repair at his own expense the oven in the kitchens of the Imperial Palace, as the money necessary for such a trumpery piece of work was not forthcoming. Nay more! The Sultan's sister, Adilé Sultan, whose residence was in a charming villa, at Candilli, just across the waters of the Bosphorus, did not receive one piastre of her monthly allowance from September to April, and herself and her domestic establishment were for those six months living from hand to mouth, on such money as they could scrape together by petty loans among their friends and dependents,

the Princess all the time bitterly complaining of her brother, whose improvidence and extravagance had brought the family to so dire an extremity.

The first of April, 1876, came, and it was "All Fools' Day" to the holders of Ottoman bonds. After long hesitation, real or affected, the Government of the Sublime Porte made known their probably long adopted resolution of deferring payment of the dividend of the debt due at that date. The representatives of the English and other foreign bond-holders left Constantinople one by one, some of them, like Sir Philip Rose and Mr. Staniforth, endeavouring, as it seemed, to soothe the disappointment and cover the disgrace of their defeat by seeking a quarrel with the correspondent of an English newspaper, not because he had opposed their imbroglio, but simply because he had refused to recommend it. They all went away *re-infectâ*, and did not even take with them, as a liniment to their sore hearts, so handsome a present as Mr. Hamond was proud to show to his honourable colleagues in the House of Commons. With respect to Mr. Hamond and his golden snuff-box, we were told here that when it was resolved in Council that Mr. Hamond should be consoled for the failure of his scheme by the gift of that bauble, the Minister of the Marine, Dervish Pasha, suggested that "a brand-new snuff-box would cost £500 Turkish, but that he had a second-hand one, a former token of the Sultan's regard to himself,

which the Government could have from him at the reduced price of £300 Turkish." The hint was taken. Dervish's old snuff-box, "as good as new," was handed over to Mr. Hamond, but the unfortunate Minister of Marine is still waiting for his £300 Turkish. I can guarantee the anecdote as perfectly authentic, and "Dervish's snuff-box" is a theme of endless mirth to the Grand Vizier, who is not a little proud of the skill with which he had "done" his colleague.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ENGLISH ON THE BOSPHORUS.

ENGLISH OPERATIVES.—THE IMPERIAL OTTOMAN NAVAL ESTABLISHMENT.—AN ENGLISH COLONY.—ENGLISH HOMES.—COTTAGE-HOMES AND VILLA-HOMES.—NEW CHALCEDON.—THE ISLANDS OF THE BLESSED.—THE SULTAN'S PALACES.—THE BIBLE IN TURKEY.

I SAID somewhere in the foregoing chapter that a certain number of English working men employed at the Imperial Naval Arsenal, at Hasskeui, appeared before her Majesty's Consul-General, Sir Philip Francis, asking his advice under the difficulties in which they were placed by the Ottoman Government, who had not paid them one piastre of their wages for nearly five months. The clean, healthy faces, and decent Sunday garb in which these honest Britons were clothed, contrasting so pleasantly with the dirt and rags, and loathsome look of disease common to a large part of the human as well as canine population of this place, and the manly, moderate and evidently truthful language in which they retailed their grievances, awakened my interest on behalf of these sturdy operatives, and

I gladly accepted Sir Philip's invitation to return their visit, and see their workshops and home in their once flourishing colony at Hasskeui.

I arrived at Constantinople, as I said, at the beginning of winter, the time of the year least favourable to receive an adequate impression of the unmatched beauties of the Bosphorus, but had seen enough of it, even in its least favourable condition, to fill up in my imagination the picture which the Strait must exhibit when in a month or two it should go through the magic transformation of the early spring. I had twice driven and steamed as far as Therapia and Buyukdere; twice crossed over to the Asiatic shore at Scutari and Kadikeui, and taken long walks and rides along shore and across the hills, beyond Ferikeui, and Fondookli, as far as Ortakeui and Arnaout Keui on one side, and past the suburb of Kassim Pasha, in the direction of the "Sweet Waters of Europe" on the other. I had visited a Mussulman gentleman and scholar at Roumeli Hissar, where he then lived a secluded life, dividing his time between his excellent library and his garden—a little paradise, fenced round by the battlemented walls and towers of the "old Castle of Europe"—and climbed up to the height where Mr. Washburne directs his American College above Bebek. Stripped though it then was of the little verdure the trees afford which the Osmanlis suffer to grow on its hills, the Bosphorus, if you plied along its shores on a fine day, was a scene, or rather a succession of

scenes, of incomparable loveliness, its headlands and bays charmingly dovetailing and blending into one another, receding, projecting, unfolding themselves before you at every stage of your progress—every bay a secluded little mountain lake, every promontory as you round it or top it laying open a new lake, more calm, more deep-blue, more sweetly smiling than the former—a series of landscapes to which hardly any artist, except Preziosi, an Italian, Jerichau, a Dane, and Aivassoski, a Russian, has even attempted to do justice.

With one of the Sultan's twenty-oar barges, or with an Ambassador's despatch boat, I could imagine no greater delight than to while away the long summer day on these waters; it would be like gliding along the shore of Mergellina at Naples, or winding between the banks of the Larian Lake between Bellaggio and Como. The scenery is, indeed, less luxuriant and magnificent, but it surpasses anything to be seen anywhere else in variety and liveliness. Hundreds of fast steamers, thousands of lazy boats, a million of motley people are swarming on these deep waves; the shores are as thickly studded with human dwellings as the Riviera at Genoa, and, viewed from a distance, there is no such cluster of water-girt cities to be seen in the world as the mosque-and-minaret-crowned seven hills of Stamboul, the palace-and-barrack mass of Galata and Pera, and the cypress-fringed long sweep of Scutari and Kadikeui.

All must be seen at a distance, however, and not by any of the means of locomotion that the country affords. The little steamers of the various Turkish companies that ply along or across the Straits, looking so gay and trim as they skim the blue tide, are an unutterable mass of foulness—both deck and cabin—inside. Access to or egress from them at the Karakeui-bridge piers between Stamboul and Galata is only to be gained by several minutes' pushing and elbowing through the throng of such an unwashed multitude as could hardly be matched by the pilgrim mob besetting the portals of the Temple at Jerusalem; and as for the little canoes, wherries, or caïques, 30,000 of which are waiting for custom at all the landing-places, and ready to pounce upon a fare with a vociferation unsurpassed even at the mole of Leghorn or Naples—although no craft can glide along more pleasantly, and there are no cleaner, tidier, more honest gondoliers in the world than the white-clad *caïkji*, or boatmen in this region —no man who has not made his will and insured his life should ever get into them, for they are such frail structures that the least untoward movement is sufficient to throw them off their balance and overset them, and they are no sooner capsized than they sink, irreparably wrecked and swamped.

In one of these boats, however, rowed by two lusty Albanians, we embarked—the Consul, his cavass or body-guard, and I—and in ten minutes we were wafted over the distance between the landing-

steps at Galata, and the dockyard, about one mile up the Golden Horn, at Hasskeui. We were met at the landing-place by Mr. Walker, one of the foremen in the dockyards, were shown over a long suite of large, lofty, well-aired and lighted workshops, forges, and engine rooms, inspected the various branches of machinery bearing on the construction of a large ironclad, visited the design and model rooms, and finally saw the half-finished vessel itself as it stood propped up close to the water-edge, its six inches thick plate armour being riveted on its ribs by heavy sledge-hammers. The honours of the place were done by two English-speaking Mussulman officers of the rank of Bey, well-informed gentlemen charged with the direction and superintendence of the works, who received us with that courtesy which comes as easy to the Osmanlis of the educated classes as swimming to ducks.

The establishment of the Arsenal at Hasskeui arose from a natural instinct of national pride prompting the Turkish Government to be independent of the foreigner for the construction of its navy. The Turks, originally an inland tribe, when at the time of their early invasion they aspired to the rank of a maritime Power were in a great measure indebted to the conquered people for the models of their galleys, for the slaves who rowed them, and in some instances for the bold renegade chiefs who commanded them. The disasters of Lepanto in the sixteenth century, and of Navarino in times nearer

to us, made them aware that they had something to learn from Western civilisation in the maritime department, and, about thirty years ago, English shipwrights, mechanics, and engineers were invited to settle as a naval normal school at the dockyard at Hasskeui, as other skilled workmen were admitted into the artillery arsenal at Top-haneh, to impart their knowledge to the native workmen. When ironclad vessels became known, the present Sultan aspired to give his naval establishment a larger development, and expensive machinery and material were brought in with a view that a complete Imperial ironclad from stem to stern, and from keel to topmast, might be built on the Golden Horn; the boiler, the complicate steam-engine and elaborate plate-rolling mills, and all other appliances being provided on the spot. Success has so far crowned the enterprise that one man-of-war has already been constructed and launched, fitted for the work such a vessel, in present circumstances, could be expected to do—riding well at anchor off the Sultan's palace on the Bosphorus in the summer months, and sleeping comfortably in the still waters of the Golden Horn throughout the winter season. The launching of it was a grand ceremony; sheep were sacrificed, Pashas promoted, Beys rewarded with baksheesh, and Effendis with orders and medals, while the only man who was at all competent to estimate her cost, her worth, and probable use, exclaimed, "She is the dearest ship ever built; her

weight in copper would not pay for her." Imported skilled labour, imported iron, coal imported from Wales and Newcastle, imported capital, borrowed at 15 per cent., so long as money could be got at that rate from Europe, all went to gratify the Sultan's conceit about a "home-made man-of-war." And now we had before us such another vessel, designed in 1871, begun in 1873, and to be finished probably in 1879 or 1880, besides designs for two more ships, and, as we were told, for a dainty yacht to serve as a toy for Yoossooff Izzedin Effendi, the Sultan's eldest son.

Undoubtedly, however, the native workman has caught some skill under the influence of European handicraft. Twenty years ago no native smith or mechanic was worth more than 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* a day. There are now some rated at 6*s.* and even 8*s.* a day. They are sober, strong, willing, and faithful men, but like all who are imperfect masters of their art, apt to think they have no more to learn, and little inclined to improve their present knowledge. With respect to the common labourers, they are merely soldiers and sailors told off to arsenal duty, and they work for their rations and for their 2*d.* a day—when they can get it.

The little English colony of engineers and carpenters to whom these results are mainly due consisted at the outset of upwards of 400 working men with their families, and at their head was, first, Mr. Herdman (made Herdman Bey), who retired from

the service with a present of £1,000; and after him Mr. Alexander Shanks (Iskander Bey), who also went back to Scotland, where he is now in the employment of the Napiers at Glasgow. Under their influence sprang up good schools, a capital self-supporting mechanics' institute, with reading and lecture rooms, a circulating library and library of reference, a club, masonic hall, and co-operative stores, altogether a well-organised and well-behaved community, from which Mr. Shanks took good care to weed out the drunken, rowdy mechanics, whom the wages of £20 a month tempted to disgrace themselves by vicious or disorderly conduct. Many of these immigrant mechanics were Scotch. There was one Scotch minister and one Free Kirk preacher, besides one Church of England clergyman, a sort of missionary to the Jews, a whole tribe of which race are among the oldest settlers at Hasskeui. An excellent woman, Mrs. Freeman, conducts an orphan school, dependent on voluntary contributions.

By degrees, however, the cost of such an establishment began to be felt rather heavily. It was necessarily wasteful. Highly-paid Pashas and Beys were crowded on as nominal heads of departments; the drones soon threatened to outnumber the bees. Two or three years ago the Porte deemed it expedient to dismiss the English workmen, and now less than 100 are employed, and these, seeing the bad prospect before them, are gradually leaving the inhospitable country—sacrificing, in many instances,

two-thirds of the value of their cottage property—for some of them had bought and even built houses—and their shares in their social establishments. These operatives, as I said, had at the time received no wages for the last five months. The Government, some few days after my visit, published a notice that the salaries of public functionaries should be paid from the 1st of December, leaving former arrears to be settled by instalments at some future time—viz., the Greek Kalends. But the English workmen have as yet not received one penny of their dues, and will accept no other conditions than the full and immediate acknowledgment and satisfaction of their claims, so that a general breaking up of the whole establishment may be looked forward to. As I saw the bright faces and heard the choral songs of the children at the school-house in the village, and passed them later in the day at play on the common, I could not but regret that what had promised to become a flourishing and permanent settlement should be so likely soon to vanish from the land, leaving no trace. For though the standard of the Turkish workman has been raised, and the Government can now repair their ships, mend their boilers, and even manufacture steam-engines, the native factory cannot be said to have taken root, and the Hasskeui Dockyard is probably doomed soon to go to decay. A native real head for such a concern has not been found, punctual pay and economical purchase of material seem impracticable, system and organisation

are wanting, and the appointment of native officers is made in obedience to mere favouritism. And thus, with iron mines and coalfields at hand, with honest native labour and talent to be found if properly sought and paid for, with all the elements of success within reach, the Arsenal at Hasskeui, like so many other unlucky attempts at European civilisation under Ottoman rule, must be pronounced a failure, and what remains of it will only be a monument of that utter corruption and incapacity which characterise every branch of Turkish administration.

The country residences of English families of more thriving classes than these now ill-remunerated English workmen are also a pleasant contrast to Turkish squalor. Some of them are scattered here and there on the hills, or along shore, but others cluster together at some favourite spots like Ortakeui or Bebek, Candilli or Beylerbey, Buyukdere or Therapia, and especially at Kadikeui or Chalcedon. Many of these are merely used as summer abodes by the English bankers and merchants who own them, but some again are permanent homes, and men bound to this irksome and filthly Pera-Galata by the daily calls of their business row or ride backwards and forwards the whole year round, morning and evening, to the sweet spots where their wives and children luxuriate in pure air and rural peace, in the enjoyment of such leisure and pleasure as well-earned wealth can afford. Kadikeui, till lately a dirty Mussulman village, has sprung up as an

entirely Christian, and mostly European, English or Anglicised quarter; a little town, on level ground, in a little bay, between two bold prominent points, with clean, newly-paved streets and rows of tidy villas, laid out in little squares and marine parades, lined with miraculously saved old trees, with well-trimmed gardens, and a long range of the cliffs and stony beach; within reach extensive grounds for excursions to the cypress forest of the Scutari Cemetery, and to the summit of panoramic Boolgoorloo. I was out with one of these thrifty and hospitable householders for one evening and morning, and the quiet happiness his own family and that of many of his neighbours seemed to enjoy in their gladsome retreat made me for the time forget the horrors I had left behind me in the mouldering city of the Sultan, and in its scarcely less unwholesome diplomatic suburb. The climate of the Bosphorus is, at the season I refer to, February and March, very bracing, and though somewhat trying, yet eminently healthy —to the healthy. With that knack peculiar to the English of always finding plenty of work where for other people there seems to be nothing to do, our friends utilise the various resources and capabilities of the place. At home in bad weather they have their books, their illustrated papers, their Bibles, their peerages, their pianos, their chess and bagatelle boards. Out of doors in the sunshine they have their boat and bathing-houses, fishing and shooting parties in the bay or on the hills for men, with

scrambling on the brow of the cliffs to harden the limbs and steady the nerves of growing boys. With the girls sits the governess at her daily task; the tutor in the family is at the same time the clergyman of the little community, and he will be happy to open for your inspection the tiny but elegant church which private munificence has erected and consecrated for the worship of the Anglican colony. I have seen a café and a theatre in Kadikeui, and there are half a score of similar establishments in Pera, but the English have no need of such diversions, and little care for them. Their domestic habits go with them to the world's end. Other nations, whether Eastern or Western, understand nothing of this proud, self-dependent individualism. The dark, dingy quarters in which at Pera, as at Stamboul, at Scutari, and many another village along the shores of the Bosphorus, herd together Jews, Greeks, and Osmanlis are simply the result of helpless gregarious instincts. Other people crowd together that, if one is idle and delights in doing nothing, the rest may help him; but what the Englishman wants is room to himself to live and work. He must always be up and doing, and he only looks for company when he thinks others may join him in accomplishing what he cannot achieve by himself.

From the earliest day of March, as if to console us for our gloomy political prospects, we enjoyed the most cheerful and genial summer rather than spring weather. Fine dry days followed one ano-

ther with grateful succession. The green of the meadows revived; almond-trees were already in blossom at Kadikeui when I went up to Boolgoorloo nearly on the last day in February, and the pear and apple-trees were also all in bloom on March 29th, when I joined a party of friends bound to the Prince's Islands, or "*Daimon-nisoi*" (Isles of the Blessed), near the Asiatic coast at the entrance of the Bosphorus on the Marmora side. The whole population, both Moslem and Rayah, were breaking from winter confinement, and crowds of Turkish ladies were to be seen daily on the Corso, or carriage drive at the Taxim, outside the Rue de Pera, and weekly, on Fridays and Sundays, walking on the fresh sward at the Sweet Waters of Europe. New-born lambs in unusually great numbers were frisking and bleating in every pasture, the promise of a bountiful yield to the collectors of the sheep-tax; and the tithe on grain and other produce would prove equally beneficial if copious April showers followed upon all the accumulation of March dust. For the bane of this Roumelian and Anatolian climate is the drought, and Turkey, as well as Spain, not enjoying the moisture with which the snow mountains bless a large part of Italy, is never quite safe from the blazing sun which scorches and withers the very harvest it has helped to ripen. It is this want of summer-swollen rivers, the absence of all means of irrigation, and the scantiness of fertilising dews which gives this lovely Bosphorus and its even

more charming neighbourhood its cruel aspect of bareness and aridity. The scenery is unmatched for beauty and variety. Every hill, every headland, every secluded bay, had unspeakable charms, as I saw the landscape from my window in the stillness of early dawn, or as I gazed from one of the heights on the purple horizon at the witching hour of sunset. Somehow, however, the pictures look to the best advantage when distance lends them enchantment, and when the morning or evening haze curtains their too bold and naked outlines. The beauty of the Bosphorus, like that of many of the islands of the Archipelago, does not gain upon the beholder on a nearer approach. Even the "Isles of the Blessed," of which I had heard so much, so dear to the Greeks, to the English, and other Levantines who have their homes there to the almost total exclusion of the Moslems, even Prinkipo, with its well-trimmed gardens, and Halki, with its far-famed colleges, and Porti and Antigone, and the steeper Oxeia, and the smoother Plate—where Sir Henry Bulwer built his "folly"—were, on the whole, a disappointment to me as I threaded their narrow canals in a lazily-paddling steamer in that quiet morning and afternoon. Picturesque they all are, and extremely fertile, no doubt, wherever their soil is by thrifty Europeans turned to useful purposes; but somehow the impression they make is of so many masses of rock and dust. Verdure, the great element of natural beauty, is deficient; the eye looks

in vain everywhere for a foreground, and although better things might be hoped from the progress of April and May, one could not think without dismay of the dreariness they must exhibit during the long lapse of months between June and November. Their climate in winter is considerably milder than that of the Bosphorus, and though in summer they must be hotter than Therapia, Candilli, and other projecting points lying in the path of the wind of the two seas, I am told that the sea-breeze, never failing in the hottest hours, is sufficiently fresh to render the temperature quite endurable even in the dog-days. Turkey, like many other countries exclusively agricultural, depends for its prosperity on the harvest, and it was all a "toss up" whether the crops at that time so luxuriant would, by timely rains, be brought to maturity, or whether they would be altogether burnt up and annihilated by a continuation of the splendid weather, in which we were so ready to bask and exult.

The lovely weather seemed to have affected even Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz in all the gloom of his sullen seclusion. Official information was published at the end of March that his Majesty had shifted his quarters from his winter residence at Dolmabacheh to the adjoining palace at Cheragan, and also that he had gone up to his sweet retreat at Yildiz-Kiosk. The old palace of the Seraglio, which has been the residence of the rulers of the land which is now

Turkey for fifteen centuries, and the position of which, at the point of the triangle formed by the city of Constantine, between the Sea of Marmora and the harbour of the Golden Horn, points it out as the very key of the Bosphorus, has been abandoned by the degenerate descendants of Mohammed II., since its main building was destroyed by fire in 1863. Sultan Abd-ul-Medjid lavished immense treasures to build his new palace of Dolmabacheh, on the shore at the foot of the Pera-hill, round the turning of the left or northern bend of the Golden Horn, past the Artillery Arsenal of Top-haneh, and the suburb of Fondookli; and, not satisfied with this, Abd-ul-Aziz, his brother and successor, outdid Abd-ul-Medjid by the construction of his new palace of Cheragan, a gorgeous edifice, where millions have been sunk in precious marbles, mere splendour and magnificence so dazzling the eye as to blind it to the deficiency of architectural taste. Cheragan lies also on the shore, beyond Dolmabacheh, separated from it by only a few yards' interval, and the two mansions, with their grounds and premises, stretch on a long line fronting the Bosphorus from Top-haneh or Ortakeui, their blank walls obstructing the sea view from the high-road which runs behind them for the best part of two miles. The Sultan's removal from one to the other of these sumptuous abodes implies, therefore, only a few steps' journey, and involves neither a change of air nor of prospect, for the two palaces stand side by side, like the two wings of Carlton

House Terrace, with a gap not much larger than Waterloo Place between them.

The announced flitting, however, was only the first of the many migrations to which the Sultan would, in his idle restlessness, be impelled as the summer advanced. The care of his scores of palaces, pavilions, kiosks, and pleasaunces on either side of the Strait constituted one of the main occupations of his vacant existence. To hoard money, to pile up brick or stone and mortar, and to gaze from his window at his iron-clads riding at anchor, were the only breaks on the indolence and indulgence of his harem seclusion. A prince born in the purple, not perhaps destitute of such instincts and faculties as might have raised him to high destinies, Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz had sunk into a mere pampered and cloyed voluptuary. Unfitted for any work by his effeminate bringing up, obese and flabby, incapable of sustained exertion, mental or physical, corrupted by his own overweening consciousness of unbounded authority, and by the base adulation and adoration of those who exaggerated his conceit of a power which they exercised in his name but for their own benefit, this Padishah, this "Refuge of the World," this "Shadow of God," kept aloof from cares and duties, and withdrew within himself, limiting his intercourse to a bevy of female slaves and a herd of eunuchs, or Court-Chamberlains with eunuchs' hearts, with such effects on his temper as might be expected from a contrast between the obsequiousness that surrounded him in his fool's paradise

and the snubs and buffets which awaited him whenever he ventured into collision with the stubbornness of the outer world. It was only in his harem, as he often felt in spite of himself, that his reign was absolute. Outside its walls there were rebellious Giaours and meddling Christian potentates, and weak-minded Ministers grudging the supplies. But within those walls his stronghold was impregnable, and there he abode, invisible, inaccessible to reason or remonstrance, unamenable to advice from Vizier or Ambassador. No truth, it was felt, would make its way to the Sultan; no good would come of it if it could. For any measure of reform or improvement by which his tottering Empire might be stayed in its fall the Sultan had to be surprised, hoodwinked, or bribed into giving his consent, nor was there ever any certainty that what had been obtained by the Minister's stratagem might not at any moment be revoked by the Sovereign's caprice.

But I have suffered political considerations to divert me from the subject of this present chapter, which I intended to devote exclusively to the English colony on the Bosphorus. "One of the things I should like to call your attention to," said Sir Philip Francis, the English Consul, to whom I was indebted for much useful information, "is that we are here rather over-parsoned," and proceeding to particulars, he stated what I now will attempt to write down, quoting, as closely as I can, his own words. "I remember a good old English lady, whose home lay

in the centre of one of the most charming rural districts, and who yet came to the resolution to leave the spot to which half a century of wedded life had strongly attached her, for the only reason that she could not live where she could not enjoy 'daily services and weekly celebrations.' It might seem that any person acting under the impulse of such laudable wants would not be easily induced to settle *in partibus infidelium,* yet there is, perhaps, hardly a cathedral town in England itself where my venerable friend could have better gratified her devotional cravings than here on the Bosphorus, under the rule of the Sovereign who calls himself 'head of the Mohammedan faith.' Reckoning Stamboul and Pera, and all the various villages situated on either shore of the Strait, the British and American population averages about five hundred souls, and to minister to their spiritual wants, it is hardly exaggeration to assert that we have fifty gentlemen—one in ten—who go about in black coats and white neckcloths, and whom it would be ill manners not to designate by the much-disputed title of 'reverend.' First and foremost we have here in Pera the chaplain of her Majesty's Embassy, the Rev. C. B. Gribble, whose impressive delivery and sound doctrine edify a numerous but select official congregation; while for those whose leanings are towards the more demonstrative Ritualistic innovations there is the 'Memorial Church,' a monument in good style erected in honour of the Crimean heroes, where Mr.

Curtis, deeply versed in Byzantine Archæological lore, regularly officiates; and we muster besides, Dr. Millingen, a Presbyterian minister, and Dr. Köller, a German by extraction, but ordained in England, and equally at home in an English and German pulpit. The Scotch have their own minister, Mr. Christie, of the Established, and Mr. Brown, of the Free Kirk. The Americans assemble under the auspices of a clergyman, Mr. Tomary, and they have besides a whole colony of preachers attached to their flourishing college at Roumeli Hissar and Bebek. The little flock at Kadikeui, near Scutari, are in the charge of Messrs. Elliot, Bliss, and Wood—the first-named English, the two others Americans—numerous enough, one would think, in proportion to their congregation, to hold a council in that hallowed locality—the ancient Chalcedon—renowned in olden times for its grand ecclesiastical gatherings. The British and American Bible Societies have, besides, their clerical establishments both at Galata and Scutari, and under the shadow of the Great Mosque at Stamboul; and at Hasskeui, the home of the Israelites, there is a Church of England missionary, Mr. Neumann, and a good number of other missionaries, with missionary schools for Jew boys and girls.

"It will not be easy, after this long enumeration, to question the tolerant disposition of these good and wise Mussulmans towards the professors of alien creeds. What grievances the clause of the Andrassy

Note referring to religious equality may be intended to redress in the provinces I do not pretend to know, but here, in and about the capital, I may safely assert that the various communities of Christians enjoy as perfect a freedom not only of worship, with book, bell, and candle, but also of active and somewhat ostentatious proselytism, as the most advanced Constitutional or Republican State ever allowed. It was not in the nature of the votaries either of the Hebrew or of the Mohammedan faith to aspire to the 'conversion' of 'unbelievers,' or to dread the 'perversion' of their own people by the arguments of extraneous teachers. To believe in one Jehovah or one Allah, is for the disciple of Moses or Mohammed the greatest privilege. He may not grudge the extension of this inestimable blessing to benighted 'heathens' or 'idolaters;' but his own form of belief is, in his opinion, so simple and pure, so sunlike and self-asserting, that it ought to carry conviction with it without further reasoning; and whatever pity and contempt he may feel for the 'blind who will not see,' he is perfectly content to let them grope in darkness, heedless of the goal to which ignorance or error may lead them. The persecutions by which the Ottoman invaders established their sway in these regions, like the extermination by the Hebrews of the tribes inhabiting the Promised Land, were the result not so much of religious fanaticism as of territorial greed. The object was not to convert, but to despoil the natives, and though

the Moslem did not disdain the co-operation of those 'Giaours,' who showed no hesitation about promoting their worldly prosperity by a timely apostasy involving the loss of their eternal welfare, he slackened in his zeal as soon as it had answered his ambitious or avaricious purposes, and though he actually did not reject and spurn such converts as rendered their services available, he never made any efforts to add to their number, nor ever thought better of them for their desertion of their fathers' Creed.

"There was at all times in the intercourse between the Turk and his Christian subjects something calculated to inspire the former with unmitigated contempt not only of the character, but also of the creed of the latter, and it was also natural that he should look upon moral degradation as a necessary consequence of unsound religious doctrine. He found at his invasion a craven people, wasting in the subtleties of theological disputes an energy of which they had given no proof in the defence of their territory or of the walls of their capital. The corruption and falsehood, the abject cunning which were inherent in the enslaved condition of a vanquished race were by the conqueror ascribed to the enervating influence of a pusillanimous mistrust in God's greatness and goodness. He never knew how to put a generous construction on the sublimity of Christian self-abasement; and he felt no scruple about crushing the feelings of men who looked to a future life for the redress of

the ignominy to which they submitted in this world. It was only in later times that he had a chance of becoming acquainted with the purer faith of Protestant Christianity. His first impression of the doctrine of the Gospel was that of the abstruse mysteries, of the complicated ceremonies, of the miracles, images, and relics of the Greek and Latin Churches. It was as much as he could do to restrain his abhorrence and loathing of what seemed to him the grossest of idolatries, and it was not without scorn that he saw himself compelled to act as peacemaker in those undignified squabbles of monks and pilgrims at Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and other sanctuaries, where, without the salutary dread of his heavy-thonged horse-whip, rabid fanatics were—as they are even now—always ready to fly at each other's throats. His first instinct in presence of that grovelling superstition was sheer compassion, and it could scarcely be roused into indignation when he perceived that so debased a faith developed aggressive tendencies, and laboured at its extension among the followers of his own creed. Yet even the attempts at Christian proselytism did not in any great measure disturb the magnanimity of his forbearance, and the terrible laws punishing the Moslem's apostasy were, as a rule, or have been lately, at least, leniently interpreted and laxly applied. The Mussulman seemed inclined to leave to Allah the care of the souls 'of those who belonged to Him,' and relied on the humane and consoling doctrine embodied in the old fable of the

'Three Rings'—that fable of evident Eastern origin, which, from the days of Boccaccio to those of Lessing's 'Nathan der Weise,' was intended to teach man tolerance of other people's faith, as well as confidence in his own.

"Of late, when the more rapid advance of the Western nations in the path of civilisation struck the Moslem with the sense of his own intellectual inferiority, he not only evinced no mistrust of the religious teachers whom burning Christian charity sent forward as bearers of light into his dominions, but gladly allowed his rising generation to attend their schools, where he conceived that knowledge might be obtained with but little or no danger to the integrity of Islamism. The American College at Roumeli Hissar, and various other institutions opened on the Bosphorus and throughout the Ottoman Empire by Scotch and English missionaries number both among their boarders and their day pupils not a few children of Mussulmans of all ranks, and whatever aptitude these young Turks may evince in their acquirement of useful knowledge, it is evident either that their teachers do not ply them with sufficiently strong arguments to shake their religious convictions or that their principles in that respect are too firmly rooted to yield to dogmatic influence. The Moslem pupils almost invariably leave school—where they have edified their Christian classmates by their docility and submissiveness, if not by their intelligence—full of respect and gratitude for their

instructors, but as stanch in their allegiance to the Koran as they entered it. Their dilemma seems to be that either Christianity is the worship of one God, and as such it is identical with Mohammedanism, or it is something else, and, in that case, no sophistry can free it from the charge of idolatry.

"It is not otherwise with the Jews, for whose exclusive benefit schools have been opened both at Hasskeui on the Golden Horn and in their more numerous communities at Salonica and other important provincial cities. Neither the Jew nor the Mussulman evinces the least horror of the Bible; but no reading in its sacred pages can 'convince them against their will.' The Jew stops halfway in its perusal, the Moslem takes in both the Old and New Testament, but sticks to Mohammed's volume as a corrected edition of both.

"If anything could be more surprising than the intensity of the zeal of British and American Protestant missionaries, it would be the strange purposes to which only too much of it is directed. That the conversion of the Mussulmans or the reform of the Greek and Armenian Churches should be attempted here, where those creeds have their head-quarters, would be perfectly intelligible; but what strikes me as singular is that the reverend gentlemen who are backed by private and public Bible Societies should most eagerly seek their proselytes among the Jews, considering that the children of Israel are scattered all over the world, and that if little or no impression

can be made by Christian arguments on those members of the tribes who are settled in the West, there ought to be little encouragement to hope for success in the East. As an explanation of the phenomenon, I may state that the most strenuous endeavours to impress the Jewish mind here are made by agents of Bible Societies in Scotland, a country where, as in Greece and in Genoa, it is an established fact that no Jew can live, the natives there being sufficiently shrewd to beat the Hebrew at his own weapons. There are at Constantinople and in its suburbs about 50,000 Jews, most of them, like those of Salonica, Leghorn, and Venice, descendants of those Israelites whom the blind bigotry of Philip II. drove from Spain, and among whom a strange jargon of corrupt Castilian is still spoken. They are mostly tinmen and glaziers, window-washers and boot-cleaners, mudlarks in the bazaars, and keepers of nondescript houses, which are neither inns nor lodging-houses, but partake of the nature of both. They are pedlars of small wares, the lowest of commissionaires, and swarm in foul dens like rabbits in warrens, their numerous progeny clustering at their doors and dabbling in the mud.

"For the benefit of these people there are at Hasskeui, close to the little colony of English mechanics and engineers busy at the Naval Arsenal, two schools, one kept by Mr. Christie, supported by the Scotch Jewish Mission Society, and also by another Anglo-American Bible Society, at whose expense he is en-

gaged in a curious philological undertaking—that of translating the Scriptures into the bastard Spanish patois of the locality, which he prints in the Hebrew type, the Hebrew character only being used for reading and writing in schools where the Hebrew language is unknown, and where only base Spanish is spoken! The other school at Hasskeui is under the guidance of Mr. Neumann, acting for the Church of England Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews. The two schools average about 100 pupils between them. Their avowed object is the conversion of the 'chosen people.' That an individual conversion may have been achieved by their efforts is just possible; but I have heard of no case resting on *bonâ fide* historical evidence. At any rate, there can be no doubt about the missionaries greatly outnumbering the converts.

"Here at Galata, again, another large Jewish school has been erected by British subscription at the cost of many thousand pounds, directed by Mr. Tomary, a converted Austrian Jew, under the auspices of the Free Kirk of Scotland. There is, besides, a school for Italian Jews, kept by Miss Macgregor, also a dependent on the Scotch Free Kirk, and a Miss Ewen has a pet private mission in one of the Jewish villages on the Bosphorus. That, irrespective of their religious object, all these missions and schools may do some good in relieving want, imparting knowledge, and introducing habits of decency and cleanliness, no one would deny. The only contro-

vertible point is the adequacy of the means to the end; the melancholy consideration which suggests itself is whether the ladies and gentlemen who contributed their funds for these special, exclusive, and illusory enterprises might not be made to perceive the futility of their efforts, and to devote their charities to the general development of those civilising influences by which true religion as well as true morality is best promoted.

"Happily, men are in many cases better than the institutions they spring from. Most of the American missionaries, both at the Bible House in Constantinople and throughout the provinces, show the most laudable anxiety to extend their influence over the people by the publication not only of the Scriptures, but of books and newspapers on a variety of secular as well as spiritual subjects, in the Turkish, Arabic, Armenian, and Bulgarian languages; they war against every shape of superstition and immorality, and are foremost in all good deeds of charity, and in the promotion of all the virtues inseparable from true practical religion. On the same principle Mrs. Neumann, the wife of the missionary to the Jews, carries on an excellent private school at Hasskeui, apart from her husband's proselytising exertions, and independent of any joint-stock 'society,' her object being merely to rescue poor fatherless children from the contamination of the life by which they are surrounded, and to train them to be useful and honest members of society. That charity without the leaven

of religious enthusiasm may achieve much is, however, not a thing to be hoped. People will go on devoting their energies—*i.e.* subscribing their funds—for the conversion of the inconvertible. Why not? Are they not free to do as they please with their own? After all, is not an investment in little Levantine Jews as safe as the purchase of Ottoman bonds? There is as great a necessity for some people to get rid of their surplus wealth as for some other people to come in for it. What is good for the sowers is good also for the reapers."

CHAPTER XV.

HERZEGOVINA.

POSITION OF THE PROVINCE.—ITS POLITICAL AND ECONOMICAL CONDITIONS.—THE OUTBREAK.—ITS IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCE.—TURKISH GOVERNORS AND GENERALS.—SERVER.—RAOUF.—MUKHTAR.—THE FIGHTING ABOUT NIKSITCH.—TURKISH STRATEGY AND TACTICS.

From the middle of summer, in 1875, to May, 1876, there was civil war in Herzegovina. An insurrection broke out in that district with which the Government of the Porte at first dealt with its wonted slackness and remissness, and against which, as the movement spread, it turned all its energies, but which in the end it seemed unable fully to overcome. The Porte was hampered and hindered in its work of pacification by the interference of the Powers, which either upon its solicitation, or from their own impulse, attempted to lend their aid, and the outbreak, which had at first a local character, and was circumscribed within the limits of a home disorder, spread to adjoining and even to distant regions, and led to international complications and actual contention. Before Turkey had thoroughly subdued her Herzegovinian rebellious subjects, she

came into violent collision with her disloyal vassals of Servia and Montenegro, and, ere she could settle her differences with these two semi-independent Principalities, she brought upon herself the hostility of Russia.

The territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, sometimes ruled by the Porte as one province or *Vilayet*, sometimes split into two separate governments, constitutes the extreme north-western border of European Turkey, and is hemmed in on the north by the Austrian Provinces of Croatia and Slavonia; on the west by the strip of sea-coast—also belonging to Austria—of Dalmatia; on the south by the little domain of the Prince of Montenegro, whom Turkey claims as a dependent, but who considers himself a self-standing potentate, and by the Ottoman (Albanian) territory of Prisrend. On the east, the Drina separates Bosnia from Servia. The northern frontier of Bosnia, almost throughout its length, is formed by the Save; the western by the Dinaric Alps, which run all along the sea-border of Dalmatia, shutting in Bosnia, as well as Montenegro, except at the two narrow outlets of Klek in the Gulf of Sabbioncello and Sutorina in the Bocche di Cattaro, the limit, once, of the little Republic of Ragusa, separating its territory from the Venetian possessions on the coast of the Adriatic.

Herzegovina is properly a district of Bosnia, and lies in the south-western corner of the province, having Montenegro on the south and Dalmatia on

the west. Its chief town is Mostar; the capital of Bosnia is Seraievo or Bosna-serai. The whole territory, though mountainous, is fertile, and its population lives mainly by agriculture. Its numbers are given at 1,337,393, of whom 480,596—or a little more than one-third — are Mohammedans, and 856,797, Christians.

I have said that the insurrection in these districts has been described by some people as a by no means spontaneous movement, the mere result of the manœuvres of Panslavist committees acting in the interest of Russia, by whom not only the arms and ammunition, and the funds, but even the combatants were supplied. Mr. Holmes, Consul at Mostar, who was summoned by Sir Henry Elliot to Constantinople in the winter of 1875, for the express purpose of enlightening us as to the real condition of the insurgent districts, assured us that the Turkish Government had not lately been worse than at any former period, not worse in Bosnia or Herzegovina than in any other Ottoman province; that there had been no very loud or serious complaints, no recent cause of offence, and that the agitation was owing to the influence of Panslavist emissaries from Montenegro, Servia, and Dalmatia, from which provinces adventurers came in crowds to swell the insurgents.

There was some truth in that, and it agreed with the arguments by which General Ignatieff urged the Sultan's Government to mend their ways. "Look," he said, "at your subjects in Bosnia and Herzego-

vina, and compare their condition with that of the brethren of their own race living across the borders in Dalmatia, Croatia, etc., under Austrian rule! Can you prevent your Slavs from communing with the Austrian Slavs, from exchanging ideas with them, reciprocating their sympathies, and indulging their common hopes and aspirations? The terms on which Austria bases her sway are public security, impartial justice, political, religious, and social equality. Do you think your Christian subjects will long submit to see their most sacred rights trampled upon by your Mussulmans? And do you think your neighbours' subjects will long be restrained from vindicating those rights in their oppressed brethren's behalf?" Of course there was on the part of Turkey's neighbours political propagandism. But what gave rise to disaffection, and led to periodical spasmodical outbreaks, long before Panslavism was dreamt of, was Turkish misgovernment; a state of things introduced into the country by violence, and against which violent reaction might at all times be expected to set in. The oppression the labouring population of the Turkish provinces endured at the hands of the landowners was not an evil of recent date, but must be traced up to times anterior to the Mohammedan occupation. In Bosnia, as in all European communities, the land was originally seized by strong men, who held it on the terms of feudal tenure, and who distributed it among the peasantry to be cultivated for the common benefit of master

and man. At the time of the Mohammedan conquest most of the great landowners became Mussulmans, the only condition on which they could assert their rights over their own property, and be the equals of those invaders who had seized upon the goods of their slain or fugitive countrymen. The result was that the landed class, whether natives or intruders, were all Mussulmans, while the majority of the labouring peasantry—though not all—were Christians. There never was a law actually and absolutely forbidding the purchase of land by the Christians; but the landowners were too jealous and grasping, and the labouring peasantry too helpless and degraded, for these latter to aspire to improve their condition. The lands were farmed out to the peasants on terms perfectly analogous to the *Mezzadria*, or cultivation on half profits, a system which has existed in Lombardy and other parts of Italy from time immemorial, and which, though not the best for the landlord and the general interests of agriculture, enables the husbandman, if he is intelligent and thrifty, to make his position as comfortable as that of any man working for another's profit can well be. The terms by which the profits of the land were to be shared between landlord and tenant were apparently in Bosnia left very much to the contracting parties themselves. To meddle with them, and to establish rules guaranteeing their mutual interests, is found a matter of great difficulty even in Italy; for in spite of all legislative

provisions, a "screwing" landlord will always find the means of privately imposing onerous conditions on a needy tenant; and, on the other hand, a tenant either in flourishing circumstances, or with any prospect of bettering himself elsewhere—for this is not a case of labourers *adscripti glebæ*—will always have the power to stand up for his own terms, and establish himself on a footing of quasi-independence. There is here a question of demand and supply, and the landlord farms out his property to the tenant who bids highest, precisely as a shopkeeper accepts the best offer for his goods from his customers. The Christians in Bosnia, it may be presumed, became naturally accustomed to this state of things as the most natural, and they acquiesced in it because they knew no better. The evil lay in this, that the titles to the property were extremely ill-defined; the Beys and Aghas claimed as their own the fallow, virgin, or no-man's-land, which Christian labourers had brought into cultivation, often extending their landmarks even on property belonging to the State. The Government had no land left to dispose of; no means of encouraging any attempt at free cultivation, and no chance to offer to the peasant of emancipating himself from his master's tyranny. Immigrants from other countries came in in crowds, attracted, probably, by the vaunted fertility of the Bosnian soil, and the helplessness of so many unemployed hands enabled the landlord to select the labourer who offered himself on the lowest terms.

Even with respect to the land tax the landlord found the means of shifting the heaviest part of the burden from his own shoulders on to those of his tenant, and this hardship, for which the landlord alone was answerable, was resented by the tenant as a grievance against the Government. The peasant had, besides the labour the profits of which he shared with his master, to do, also, a good deal of work for his master's exclusive benefit, and this, most undoubtedly, came near to the nature of feudal *corvées*. The master, certainly, had no right to exact more than was by common consent set down in the contract, if the peasant was strong enough to stick to his contract; but, on the other hand, the peasant was compelled to lend himself and his cattle whenever and wherever the service of the State required it, and received no other remuneration than Government bonds, which were either never or very seldom cashed. As a reward for similar *corvées* imposed upon the Latin, or Roman Catholic community of Mostar during the war of Montenegro, in 1862, the Sultan had given them a plot of land with permission to build a church and school upon it, but, owing to the fanaticism of the Mussulmans of Herzegovina and the weakness of the Governors, the buildings were never suffered to rise above their foundation.

There was here, therefore, as a first disturbing cause, an agrarian question, and the insurgents, whenever they consented to negotiate at the various periods of the civil war, always put forward among

the most important conditions, the acknowledgment of the people's titles to a portion, say one-third, of the land, a point that could not be yielded without wounding the interests of the Beys and Aghas, a class which identified itself with the Government.

Add to the sense of this galling, however time-sanctioned, injustice, the thousand and one general and permanent shortcomings of the Turkish Government, the venality of the magistrates, the rapacity of the police, the outrages perpetrated with full impunity by the above-named Beys and Aghas, and by the authorities to whom the people vainly looked for protection, and it will be evident that it required no great incitement from abroad to rouse a rude but brave population to seek, in an appeal to arms, the redress of their grievances.

The matter seemed at first of no great importance. The outbreak began in a few villages, but there the rioters were soon overpowered and driven to the country, where they mustered in bands, taking to the mountains and clinging to the frontiers of Dalmatia and Montenegro, particularly to the latter, where they could at all times find refuge under a Government not likely to insist on their laying down their arms, and where they knew that their strength could be recruited, and their ranks filled up by volunteers akin to them by blood, and bound to them by every tie of common interests and desires. Divided into bands under the orders of Socissa, Petrovich, Paulovich, and other chiefs, whose names became

famous, they baffled pursuit by a well-combined system of desultory movements. They contrived to be everywhere or nowhere, as best suited their purposes, falling on the imperial troops when they had them at advantage, declining any encounter in which they saw themselves out-numbered, advancing or retreating with the certainty that with them lay always the choice of the battle-field. It was the same kind of party warfare—brigand warfare—with which the annals of Greece, of Calabria, of Spain and her colonies have so often made us familiar. The fire might seem, during the winter, smothered under the ashes, but the Porte had no good reason to take it for granted that it was, as the papers said, "as good as put out," for it might be, on the contrary, confidently expected to blaze forth afresh with redoubled intensity in the spring.

The Turkish soldiers had the advantage of numbers and discipline, and, as a rule, they behaved with a valour worthy of their ancient renown. But they had to deal with an enemy no less intrepid, though more wary and agile, and relying for success on tactics which Turkish officers little understood, and with which they were hardly fitted to contend. They had to carry on operations in a country where they could only be maintained at a heavy expense, and where they were exposed to the greatest hardships and the sorest privations. Even on the Bosphorus the season was that year unusually cold and gloomy; the sun, moon, and stars were only

visible at short and rare intervals, and the mails suffered frequent delays in consequence of stormy seas and snow in the mountains, leaving us, in one instance, without news of the West for more than a fortnight. We had, on New Year's Eve, a fall of snow which covered the ground to the depth of six inches, where it lay, day after day, hard and compact, smoothing even the asperities of the villanous pavement of the Great Pera main street, and enabling us for once in the year to walk with some comfort on a surface which had all the softness of a drawing-room carpet combined with the slipperiness of the floor of a rink. Under the influence of such a temperature it was no wonder to us to hear that the condition of the troops wintering in the vicinity of the Black Mountain soon became deplorable. The improvidence of the War Office left them without food or shelter, without medicines or proper attendance in the ambulances, and even in the hospital of Mostar, as I knew from sure sources, the doctors had no other provisions for themselves, or for 1500 patients, than a little unseasoned pillau, or plain-boiled rice. Without pay, without bread or meat, almost without clothing, the poor soldiers endured and died uncomplaining. "They are," we were told, "greatly dispirited, and their demoralisation has reached such a point that they threaten to pass over to Montenegro, or to cross the Austrian frontier." This fear, however, was ill-grounded. The cases of desertion among the Turks are extremely rare, for a

good Mussulman cannot reconcile himself to life out of the pale of Islam.

On the other hand, the Turkish troops might feel confident, if it was any consolation to them, that they inflicted on their enemies, or at least on their enemies' families, a hundredfold the suffering to which they were themselves exposed. From most of the villages and from vast tracts of the open country, the population had to fly *en masse*, some under the influence of terror, some in obedience to the policy of the insurgents, but most of them on the approach of the sword and fire of the unsparing Turkish soldiers. Thousands of households were deserted, their helpless inmates—decrepit old men, defenceless women and children—migrated across the border, and were compelled to rely on the hospitality either of Montenegro, who had nothing to give, or on that of the unsympathising Austro-Hungarian Government, who grudged what it doled out to them.

An outcry went forth against Server Pasha, who was sent out as a pacificator of the revolted districts, in December, and had been preceded by a declaration that he intended to re-establish order on the basis of justice and humanity, but whom the Christians charged with ill-faith as well as fanaticism, and with a design to pacify the district by extermination, driving off all the non-Mussulmans, and re-colonising the land with Asiatic Mohammedans. I have read despatches of the Consuls who saw this Pasha at Mostar, and to whom he expressed his opinion that "he would rather

have a desert than a disaffected population;" and if the Consular reports may be trusted, the Imperial Commissioner was very near the accomplishment of his object. The outrages which were perpetrated under the Consul's own eyes—of those Consuls who had assembled with a view to reconcile the rebels with the Government—transcend all belief: "A Christian is found murdered; he is at once buried out of sight, and no question asked. Another is maltreated by Mussulmans; the police interfere and take hold, not of the offenders but of the victim." There was no end to the deeds of violence and extortion, no end to the murders. The Mussulmans of the province, Slavs by race as their Christian fellow-subjects, were by nature no bigots, and the two creeds harboured hitherto no very relentless mutual hostility. It was Server Pasha, we were told, who spread mistrust and ill-will between them, rousing the fears of the Mussulmans by persuading them that the insurrection, if successful, would lead to their spoliation and expulsion, thus enlisting their very instinct of self-preservation in the interests of the Government. Therein lay the main obstacle to all projected reform, that any seeming concession made to the Christians, however illusory and deceptive, had the effect of raising their demands and pretensions, and in a corresponding degree creating alarm and implacable rage among the Mussulmans. It did not seem likely that the disturbed districts could ever be pacified otherwise than by its utter depopulation, and, indeed, two-

thirds of it had already been laid waste and ravaged. Server Pasha, it is alleged, exulted at the solitude he had made, and he asked ingenuously and not without reason, "Where is now the insurrection?" But the truth is that, although there was silence in Mostar, the insurgents were still holding their ground in the mountains.

Important as the campaign in Herzegovina eventually turned out in its results, the particulars were not, however, even at the time, very interesting. Disgusted with the ill-success of its superior officers, the Government of the Porte placed one Pasha after another in command, every change being hailed with a sanguine expectation which was seldom justified by success. Dervish Pasha, whom I found in place on my arrival, was a month or two afterwards superseded by Raouf Pasha, who, towards the end of December, attempted to drive the insurgents from their last retreat of the Duga Pass, on the Montenegrin frontier, and to relieve the distress of the garrison of Niksitch, the fortress lying close upon the edge of that Principality which the insurgents closely blockaded, and hoped to have soon at discretion. He collected a mass of thirty battalions, forced the mountain defile, and by hard fighting accomplished his object, throwing about two months' provisions into the beleaguered stronghold. Raouf, however, had no sooner achieved this splendid deed of arms than the intelligence reached him of his appointment as Governor-General of Herzegovina—now treated as a separate

province—a promotion implying his removal from the command of the troops, to which the same decree appointed Ahmed Mukhtar. This was a deplorable change in every respect, for Raouf Pasha, a Circassian, was every inch a soldier, whose presence electrified the troops by his example of heroic courage and endurance, the General submitting to the hardships of a winter campaign at the bivouac and on the march like the meanest of his followers, while he possessed none of the qualities which could make him of use in his new capacity of Governor, and could only waste his time in idle residence at Mostar. Ahmed Mukhtar, on the other hand, enjoyed but an indifferent reputation for military talents. The Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Pasha, who had been fortunate in his appointment of Raouf, was however compelled, greatly against his own judgment, to acquiesce in this new arrangement, which was entirely owing to the arbitrary caprice of the Sultan or of his harem.

The two months for which Niksitch had been provided had expired, and it became necessary to renew the dangerous experiment of revictualling it. Ahmed Mukhtar marched again and again on the track of his predecessor, sometimes with good, at other times with ill fortune; but it soon became impossible to rely on his reports of his various engagements, so ready was he to exaggerate the importance of his more than problematic victories, and to palliate the extent of his undoubted reverses.

Ahmed Mukhtar is, in this respect, no exception to the common rule of his countrymen. Whatever qualities, good, bad, or indifferent, may be attributed to the Turks—and I believe I can hardly be charged with ever having flattered them—there is this much to be said in their favour, that they know not how to lie. They do try their hand at it, doubtless, for these are no longer the days in which strength and bravery incline the conquering race to scorn equivocation and subterfuge as weapons to be left to an enslaved people. But somehow, in all their attempts to tamper with the truth in their despatches, the Turks betray the clumsiness of men not to the manner born, and they never venture on a false statement without unwittingly allowing the real fact to strike the eye of any one in the least accustomed to read between the lines.

This same disposition to draw the long-bow, and the same clumsiness in disguising too obvious truths, was perceptible throughout the accounts Mukhtar sent fifteen months ago of his doings in Herzegovina, and it is transparent now (June, 1877) in the bulletins he sends of his conduct as commander-in-chief of the Ottoman armies in Armenia, where the issues of the war, so far as one can make out, are by no means likely to turn out in his favour. By what secret influence Mukhtar contrived to maintain himself under Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid in the highly responsible post to which Court intrigue raised him under Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz, is to me a problem; but

the astounding fact is that there he is, compromising his country's destinies by his blunders, and mystifying the world by his telegrams.

On the 22nd of April, 1876, Mukhtar Pasha was enabled to inform the Government of the Porte that there had been six days' hard fighting in the Duga Pass, and that with seventeen battalions he had been able to march between Gatchko and Niksitch, "there and back," as he expressed it, his troops signalising every step of their progress by victorious combats against forces twice their superior. He had however, at this juncture, for the second time, failed in his enterprise of revictualling Niksitch, a feat which seemed to be, from beginning to end, the great test of a Turkish commander's abilities throughout that Herzegovinian campaign. Mukhtar complained that the insurgents, who were at least 14,000, occupying a strong position, consisted—half their number—of Servians and Montenegrins, and proclaimed at the close of his report that "the Prince of Montenegro had, on that day, virtually made open war upon Turkey."

The Pasha was evidently romancing, for the Servians could not have crossed all the territory between their own frontier and Herzegovina without their march, if they were a body at all considerable, being noticed, and nothing had hitherto ever been heard of any movement on their part. With respect to the Montenegrins, if they were at all present, it was proved by the Pasha's report itself that they main-

tained an observant attitude on their own frontier, and took no part in the fray. However, Mukhtar was hard driven by the necessity of accounting for a defeat as he best could.

But the very fictions of Mukhtar Pasha sufficiently showed how the wind blew. On the first coming of spring, the propitious time for a renewal of hostilities, Turkey had to consider not only how she was to fight the rebels, but also how she was to deal with Montenegro and Servia. For, however discordant might be the views and interests of those two Principalities, and however the aspirations of one might clash with those of the other, it was evident that they looked upon the Turk as their common enemy, and the Ottoman troops could not attack one of them without being taken to account by the other. The Servians and Montenegrins had settled it in their own minds that the insurrection in Herzegovina must be productive of some good for themselves. They looked upon that district and upon the whole of Bosnia as the spoils of a victory which the Cross was to achieve over the Crescent, and the only question which could arise would be as to the share each of them was to come in for. They would take what suited them by peaceful arrangement, if that should be possible, consenting to pay a tribute to the Porte proportionate to their respective aggrandisement, but if not by agreement, then they would take what they coveted by main force and anyhow. The Servians especially, who boasted that

they could muster 150,000 combatants, and were looking out everywhere for arms and ammunition, felt as if they were eventually called upon to play in Turkey the part sustained by "little Piedmont" in Italy; to place themselves at the head of that Slavic Confederation which was to be erected on the ruins of the Ottoman, and possibly also of the Austro-Hungarian Empire — a Confederation in which alone, they thought, Europe would find the barrier against the otherwise inevitable southern advance of Russia.

Without looking so far into the future, however, Servia would for the present have been satisfied with only that one leaf of the artichoke, the province of Bosnia. It was to little purpose that men asked how the 500,000 Mussulmans—natives of the country—were to be disposed of. The Servians saw no necessity why these poor people should either be massacred or driven from their homes and lands. They should be suffered to abide in the province as they did then, infinitely better treated by the laws of their Christian brethren than these ever were under Moslem rule, and they should fare no worse than the Mohammedan subjects of France in Algeria, or those of England in India. The Servians did not see why the submission of the Turk to Rayah government upon the footing of legal equality should be a greater hardship than that supremacy of the Turk to which the Rayah had had to submit for centuries. Except in as far as it might clash with the provisions of the

civil law, the Mussulmans would enjoy the most unlimited freedom in the exercise of their religion. That this would be the most plausible and the only peaceful solution of the Herzegovinian difficulty, was a point upon which, even in Constantinople, many people began to agree; and it is by no means improbable that the Porte might, in the difficulties she had then to contend with, be brought to accede to terms which, without impairing its rights of high *suzeraineté* over its provinces, might enable it to enjoy a portion of their revenues in the shape of a tribute, without being at the pains of governing disaffected and turbulent subjects. Where opposition might be apprehended was on the part of Russia and Austria; but the Servians flattered themselves that the other European Powers could, if they exerted themselves, have contrived to bring the Czar and the Kaiser to listen to reason.

On the Turkish side, again, it should be borne in mind that Mukhtar Pasha belonged to that war party which was there known under the name of "Young Turkey," and of which the former Vizier, Hussein Avni Pasha, was the acknowledged head. These men had been from the very outbreak of the insurrection fully aware that the revolt the Government of the Porte had to deal with was not merely limited to the Bosnians and Herzegovinians, but that it had its stronghold in Servia and Montenegro, as well as in those provinces of Austria where the aspirations of the Slav party had been stirred up by

the summer tour of the Emperor Francis Joseph along the borders of Dalmatia. Of the construction which both the Slavs of the Ottoman and of the Austrian Empires put upon that imperial progress and of the agitation it gave rise to, I have given some hints in my account of the voyage from Brindisi to Constantinople in the first chapter. When I arrived at Constantinople about three months later, I found the Sultan's Council divided between the influence of the war party, headed by Hussein Avni Pasha, who advised immediate h os tilities against Montenegro, Servia, and if necessary against Austria, and that of the men in power, the Vizier, Mahmoud Pasha and his colleagues, who, prompted by Russia, advocated moderate measures, and sought their safety in the mediation of the European Powers. All the efforts of these Powers to patch up a peace between the Porte and its revolted subjects had turned out failures. Upon this unfavourable result of their peaceful policy, the warlike spirits even of the Sultan's actual advisers were roused, and for several weeks it was contemplated to bring together large bodies of troops at Scutari, in Albania, with a view, as it is natural to suppose, to venture upon an attack on Montenegro on the southern side. It was at this juncture and under the sway of these unfriendly feelings, that Mukhtar Pasha proclaimed "that the Prince of Montenegro had now made open war upon Turkey."

Were we to infer that Turkey was bent on waging

open war with Montenegro? Many people thought so at Constantinople, and had no doubt that any resolution to that effect might be looked upon as the beginning of the end. There was a time, indeed, in which a good strong resolution to proceed to decisive measures against Montenegro might have been considered both advisable and justifiable, for the conduct of the Sovereign of that little Principality or of his subjects amounted to virtual hostility to the Ottoman Government. But the enterprise, which was sufficiently dangerous from the beginning, had become in process of time absolutely desperate, when both the military and financial resources of the empire had been exhausted by a six months' unavailing struggle with a mere handful of the insurgents, and when these latter had given signs of a stout determination which, while it baffled the best intentions of a puzzled diplomacy, enlisted in their favour the sympathies of European opinion. To attack Montenegro and to arouse Servia from her wavering and expectant policy, forcing her to an invasion of Bosnia, would be one and the same thing; for whatever jealousies might exist between the Courts and Governments of those tributary Principalities, they both equally felt that in any quarrel with the Porte, their interests were identical, and that an attack upon one conveyed a deliberate menace to both of them. A contest which had already assumed the most bloody character in Herzegovina would now be extended over a much larger area—it would bring much

greater masses of combatants into action, and its atrocities would be aggravated by the conviction that the quarrel was past all hope of diplomatic arrangement, and had now to be fought out to the bitter end. In such circumstances it was no longer by persuasion, but only by sheer force, that Europe could hope to step between the combatants. The armed intervention of all or some of the Powers had become a necessity, and the question was which of the Powers could be trusted with the task with the least chance of a collision and the least risk of leading to a violent solution of this fatal Eastern question. No doubt, Austria was the State more immediately at hand; it had the strongest interest in averting a general catastrophe, and had so long been contemplating the necessity of following up words by deeds as to be virtually pledged to do so. But an armed occupation of any part of the Ottoman territory in opposition, not only to the Herzegovinian insurgents, but also to Servia and Montenegro, was not only in itself a very arduous and expensive undertaking, but it could hardly be popular in Liberal Europe, and would be felt as little less than outrageous by the excitable population of the Slav provinces of the Austrian Empire. In spite of the goodwill shown by Count Andrassy in his late scheme for a reconciliation between the Turks and the Herzegovinians, the name of Austria was never mentioned in Turkey by either party without mistrust. It was on Austria herself that both the best hopes and the worst fears

of the insurgents were built; for if, on the one hand, they were aware that the Germano-Magyar Government had every interest in crushing Slavic aspirations, they, on the other hand, felt confident that the Slav element in Dalmatia, Croatia, and other provinces could exercise a sufficiently strong moral and material influence over the Kaiser's Council to paralyse the whole energy of the Kaiser's Government. As Austria, though backed by the other Powers, had been unable to achieve anything by pacific negotiation, so she would also be equally powerless in any attempt at armed intervention, for she knew not how many sympathisers with Slavic aspirations she might not have in that army on which she must rely on any emergency, in which such officers as General Rodich filled the first ranks, and of which the Archduke Albrecht was the idol. Austrian intervention, besides, must needs determine and hasten Russian intervention, and as to any results that might be expected from the juxtaposition of the forces of the two empires on the Danube or the Save, it was as idle to speculate now as it has been at all times since the Ottoman Power first exhibited symptoms of approaching dissolution. That, whoever else might gain by a foreign intervention, Turkey was sure to lose, was very evident; for, even admitting that the invading Austrians or Russians might be sufficiently generous to act purely in the interests of peace and without claiming any compensation for themselves, there could be no doubt that the only condition upon which

the country could, under present circumstances, be pacified, would be such degree of emancipation of the insurgent districts as would meet the utmost bent of their demands; otherwise, it would always be in their power to renew the struggle and perpetuate the foreign occupation. But, on the other hand, if the revolted provinces carried their point and established independence, how could the Porte hope to keep the other provinces under subjection; or how could it, indeed, weather the storm which the bare prospect of a continuance and extension of the present disturbance was already brewing around it? For the discontent arising from general distress was very apparent, and the most moderate men declared that the state of things was becoming intolerable. There is no word of opprobrium that was not, at the time, loudly flung at the names of the Ottoman rulers and of the Sovereign at the head of them; and I repeatedly heard with my own ears old Mussulmans in remote and peaceful villages of Asia Minor, where, as everywhere else, the ruling race is being rapidly ousted by the Greeks, say that "the Herzegovinians were their best friends, as they were at war against the Government, and *Inshallah!* it might be hoped they would hold out till they had altogether overthrown it." In such a state of affairs it might certainly seem impossible that either the Government then in power or any other should entertain serious thoughts of an outbreak with Montenegro. But any other line of policy was equally bristling

with difficulties, and how either the Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Pasha, or any other man in his place might manage to steer safe of so many rocks ahead was perfectly incomprehensible.

In defiance of all the above considerations we went towards the end of that April through an alarming crisis, and we did not for some time recover our equanimity. The unwise despatch by which Mukhtar Pasha announced that Prince Nicholas had ventured on open hostilities found the Government of the Porte strongly predisposed against Montenegro, and already so far bent on proceeding to extreme measures against that Principality as to have some time before issued orders to bring together a force of thirty battalions at Scutari, in Albania, close to the southern frontier of that little vassal State. Upon the arrival of the first telegram, therefore, a stormy deliberation was held in the Council, at the close of which Riza Pasha, Minister for War, was dismissed, and his place was filled by Dervish Pasha, the former Minister of Marine, and other members were brought into the Cabinet, by which a decided ascendency was given to the war party. In a council which was held in the Sultan's presence on the subject, Dervish Pasha was so far carried away by his zeal as to assure his imperial master that, if allowed freedom of action, he would "lay at the Padishah's feet 50,000 Christian heads," a proposal at which we are told, the Sultan himself, *Hunkiar*, or "Manslayer," as he is called, shuddered. A

proposition, however, to consider the conduct of Montenegro in the late encounter a *casus belli* found strong support in the Council, and was all but adopted when the Council adjourned.

On the ensuing day General Ignatieff had an interview with Sir Henry Elliot, and held afterwards a conference with the representatives of the other Powers, as the result of which the Russian Ambassador, who was the *Doyen* of the diplomatic body, was empowered to proceed to the Sublime Porte, and to convey to the Grand Vizier their unanimous resolution on the subject. General Ignatieff had, therefore, an interview with the Grand Vizier on the following morning, and advised him to urge the Council to reconsider their resolution, as Montenegro had given no provocation, and as the projected hostilities against that State might lead to complications not unlikely to bring about a violent solution of the much-dreaded Eastern question. The Grand Vizier gave the Ambassador the fullest assurance of his own pacific disposition, but expressed himself unable to withstand the ascendency of the war party both among his colleagues, over whose appointment he had no control, and among the private advisers of the Sultan. The Russian Ambassador then engaged the Vizier to proceed to the Sultan, and to convey to his Imperial Majesty the wishes of the representatives of the Six Powers, volunteering to see the Sultan himself if the Vizier had not sufficient courage to speak out. The Grand Vizier prostrated himself before

his Sovereign, and came back with a full assurance that the thought of immediate hostilities against the Prince of Montenegro would not be persevered in, and that efficient measures would only be adopted to guard against his future interference, and to bring the Herzegovinian insurrection to a speedy end. It was subsequently understood that the thirty battalions should with all possible speed be assembled at Scutari, and that the new War Minister, Dervish Pasha, should at once proceed to that place as *Serdar Ekrem*, or Commander-in-Chief of the forces, and also that in Herzegovina, where already fifty-two battalions were in the field, Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha should, with twenty-five battalions, again on the morrow (April 25th) march across the Duga Pass and renew his attempt to relieve Niksitch. Turkish battalions consisted of 400 combatants each. The Ottoman force in Herzegovina amounted, therefore, to 20,800 men. The force to be concentrated at Scutari was to consist of 12,000; and it was hoped that Mukhtar Pasha might accomplish with 10,000 men the task in which he had failed with 6,800. The Government of the Porte, however, was straining every nerve to send fresh troops to its north-western provinces, and all the districts of Asia Minor and Syria were called upon for the contingents of their last reserves. It was even supposed that the mission of Abraham Pasha, a Christian, and agent of the Khedive at Constantinople, who had lately been appointed Minister without portfolio in

the Ottoman Cabinet, and who immediately afterwards embarked for Alexandria—was to induce the Khedive to lend the Sultan an auxiliary Egyptian force, intended, not to take part in active military operations, but simply to fill the place of the Turkish troops, so as to allow the disengaged garrisons, especially those of Syria and Asia Minor, to proceed to the theatre of war in Herzegovina. But it seemed then doubtful whether the Sultan's Government would stoop to ask for such a reinforcement, and very improbable that Egypt, even if applied to, would be either able or willing to accede to the demand, except on conditions which might appear to the Porte more onerous than the terms on which it might be able to settle its disputes with the Herzegovinian insurgents. As a part of the alleged plan, it was said that 10,000 Egyptians were to occupy the disturbed districts of the Yemen. But if the Egyptians once got into those districts, when might they be expected to come out of them again ?

The conclusion of this is that there was then for some time a lull in the atmosphere ; but it would have been rash to assert that the storm had completely blown over. There was, as I have said, and there had been from the very outbreak of the disturbances in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a Young Turkey, or war party, who looked to Servia and Montenegro, and indeed to Austria and Russia, as the real authors and movers of the insurrection, and who always thought that no good could be achieved unless

the evil was struck at the root by a direct attack on Montenegro, which should bring the refractory vassals of the Porte to their allegiance, and at the same time give the Great Powers to understand that Turkey was aware of their intentions, and that, although she might have to succumb to open force, she would not fall a victim to intrigue. There was something noble and magnanimous in that conceit, and, had it been acted upon eight months before, it might have made a strong appeal to brave men's sympathies, and, by deserving, might perhaps even have commanded success. Had the Sultan, for instance, and all the men of high distinction, stood up with sufficient energy, had they unfurled the Prophet's banner, mounted on horseback, and marched *en masse*, declaring that they would come to no terms with rebels in arms, that they repented former concessions, and that they would either perish or bring not only the Bosnian and Herzegovinian insurgents but also Servia and Montenegro to subjection, there would have been, if not safety, at least honour in their resolution. But Abd-ul-Aziz—Allah knows!—was not a Bajazet or a Mohammed; nor were the men of the so-called 'war party' by any means as earnest in their ardour for the cause of the Crescent as they pretended to be. The so-called Young Turkey were not a patriotic, but merely a political party. Their aim was not to wage war against the *Giaours*, but simply to oust the present Ministers, and to put themselves into their place. Hussein Avni Pasha him-

self, who was at the head of that party, who had been Grand Vizier, and was at this time *Vali*, or Governor-General at Broussa, was only anxious to regain his post at the head of the Government, and in pursuance of that object he carried his complacency to the Sultan so far as to send to the palace, for the private use of his Sovereign, all the money he was able to wrest from the taxpayers in his province, which ought to have been paid into the Treasury or the Bank. A sum of £T.400,000 had already, as I was assured, been diverted from its proper channel and offered as baksheesh to a ruler whose cry was still, "Give, give!" Had Hussein Avni Pasha been able to carry his point and supersede Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, does anybody think the policy would have been materially altered? Would the new Grand Vizier have been as warlike in office as he was for nine months in opposition? Most assuredly not!

In cold blood and upon mature deliberation, no Turkish Minister would ever so far have displeased Russia as to venture on an open attack on Montenegro. It was well known that little Principality was looked upon as an advanced post of the great Northern Empire; and, as General Ignatieff freely avowed to the Grand Vizier at this juncture, to touch Montenegro was to open up the Eastern Question. So long as Mahmoud Nedim, or Mahmoudoff, sat as Grand Vizier in the Divan, it was not the Sultan, but the Czar's representative, who ruled the Ottoman Empire. Russia and her agent were at

this time bent on peace, and, as keepers of the peace, they relied on the support of all the Powers in Europe. Three or four days before peace had been endangered; the Young Turkey party had the upper hand—we were on the brink of an abyss—but General Ignatieff and his diplomatic colleagues allayed the storm; they strengthened the Vizier and recalled the Sultan to his senses. What was accomplished at the end of that week could equally be achieved at any future time, no matter in what mood the Sultan might be, no matter whether Hussein Avni or any other war party Grand Vizier were in office. There was then no statesman in Turkey who would, with his eyes open and of deliberate purpose, strike his head against a stone wall, or, what would be the same thing, go to war in sheer defiance of the veto of Russia and Europe. But there is such a thing as drifting unconsciously and unwillingly into war, and therein lay the main danger. On the one hand there was Turkey, smarting, it cannot be denied, under constant provocation; on the other, Servia, Montenegro, and the Austrian Slavs fully aware of Turkey's weakness, and anxious to turn it to their own purpose. We had already open hostilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, attended by incessant "alarms and excursions" on the Montenegrin, Servian, and Austrian frontier. Montenegro, which was only open to inroads on its northern border, saw itself now threatened with an attack on its southern frontier. On all sides that little cluster of

the Black Mountains would henceforth be encompassed with the advanced posts of the Ottoman army. On every road, at the entrance of every mountain pass, the Montenegrin would see the Turkish rifle aimed at his breast. Could such a state of things be long continued without bringing on a collision? And could any one estimate all the possible results even of a mere brush between combatants animated by such inveterate hostile feelings? The Ottoman War Department at this time concentrated all its forces upon Montenegro, withdrawing even from Widdin the battalions which had been quartered there to keep the Servians in check. In their eagerness to subdue Herzegovina, the Turks exposed Bosnia to invasion. They said, indeed, that when they had settled Herzegovina, and, if needful, crushed Montenegro, the time would come to serve out Bosnia, and, if necessary, to punish Servia as well; but to march against an enemy with one's back exposed to the onset of another enemy would have seemed, to say the least, clumsy strategy on the Turks' part. In the meanwhile the mere anticipation of such contingencies, the mere discussion of all these plans of operation, had the immediate effect of keeping men's minds on the stretch, creating incessant disquiet, sinking the luckless Ottoman funds to unprecedented depths, and paralysing the efforts of those who were working at the relief of the Treasury by a conversion or unification of the Turkish Debt.

We continued meanwhile to receive from Mukhtar

Pasha more of those despatches, which will be for ever memorable in the annals of military literature. On Monday, May-day, he informed the Porte that he had made another attempt to relieve Niksitch, of course, again with astonishing success. In pursuit of his object, he had still at the block-house of Pressieka a convoy of 1000 mules, which had been left there under the escort of two battalions, at the close of his unsuccessful attempt of the previous week. He took with him 27 battalions, which added to the troops already on the spot, and some bands of Bashi-Bazouks supplied by the neighbouring mountain population, constituted a force of 12,000 to 18,000 combatants. On Friday, the 28th of April, he says, he completely defeated the insurgents at Pressieka, and "the convoys of provisions were victoriously carried into Niksitch." On the following Saturday he had another action with the insurgents, who had been reinforced in the night, and who, the more of them were killed, seemed to become more numerous, and he again thoroughly routed them. On Sunday he was already on his way back towards Gatchko, and had for the third time to fight his way through the insurgents, who had gathered in force in his rear, and once more "gained a glorious victory," after which he achieved his retreat unmolested. He had to contend on the first day with 8500 of the enemy; on the second with 13,000; on the third, with upwards of 16,000—one more victory and he would have been outnumbered—and alto-

gether, he inflicted upon them immense losses, amounting from 1300 to 1400, his own being 58 killed and 164 wounded.

His immediate object was to revictual Niksitch, and this he so far accomplished that on the first day "the convoys of provisions were victoriously carried into the place." He does not state that his victorious troops entered Niksitch, or that they themselves escorted the "convoys." It may therefore have been accomplished by the two battalions whom he had left with the 1,000 mules at Pressieka, or as private telegrams assert, by the garrison and people of the beleaguered place itself, who, profiting by the battle in which the insurgents were engaged on that day, came forth from their stronghold, gained Pressieka by a mountain path, and there took up as much of the provisions as they could carry on their backs—about 300 loads—and with these regained the place they had come from. This was however the all-important point, for one would have been glad to make out whether the whole of the provisions laid up at Pressieka—sufficient for six months—found its way into Niksitch, as the Pasha said, or whether, as private reports still insisted on, all the relief the place received could not have enabled it to subsist more than eight or ten days, or at the utmost two or three weeks. The Minister of War, Dervish Pasha, who seemed to have had little reason to be satisfied with the exploit of his Commander-in-Chief, telegraphed to him, saying

that people in Constantinople doubted whether himself, Mukhtar, or any of his troops had ever been at Niksitch, and the answer was that "he had actually been there, entering the place and again leaving it, after a stay of two hours on Friday night." It is evident that even if he spoke the truth, neither himself nor any of his troops tarried long on the spot, nor were there to any good purpose, their movements being hurried by the presentiment that the enemy, though "thoroughly beaten," was not altogether annihilated, and that a new and more serious conflict awaited the Ottoman troops on the morrow. In the morning, in fact, and on the ensuing day there were again bloody engagements, and although the result was invariably a "complete" Turkish victory, it was very clear that the Pasha had only a running fight of it, and every triumph found him one stage farther on his backward way. Notwithstanding the "decisive" nature of the result of the third engagement, the insurgents did not see that they were beaten, and the Pasha, who, although he counted, never could get a good sight of them hidden as they were in the bush, had to abandon the pursuit, owing to the thickness of the forest, "lest the troops might not recognise each other in the brushwood, and accidents might ensue."

Read the report as one may, it was easy to perceive that the oft-repeated assertion, "The victory is complete, and Niksitch is provisioned," was not sufficient to remove the impression that nothing had

been done which might not, within a very few days, have to be done over again. The insurrection was still "scotched, but not killed," and Niksitch would at no distant period—certainly within the month—have again to be relieved by the same, or perhaps by more strenuous efforts than those by which it had obtained a short precarious subsistence. What really might have answered the purpose would have been such a defeat of the insurgents as might have enabled the Commander-in-Chief to establish a permanent communication with the beleaguered place, and make it in case of need his base of operations against Montenegro; but so far from accomplishing this, Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha, if either he or his men ever actually reached the place, fell back from it as if the ground had been too hot under his feet, and made good his retreat by hard, incessant fighting, never attempting to dislodge the enemies from the brushwood in which they evidently still held their ground, rallying on the footsteps of the retreating Turkish battalions. The fault of all this did not altogether lie with Mukhtar Pasha himself. The order to march to the relief of Niksitch was telegraphed to him from the War Office at a moment's notice, and it was too pressing and peremptory to allow him leisure for those preparations without which, in the opinion of very competent military authorities, no prudent commander would have ventured on an expedition of this nature. He had to march through a mountain defile, where his

retreat could at any moment be cut off by the enemy. The distress of Niksitch was extreme. His march must needs be of the swiftest; he could encumber his troops neither with sufficient provisions nor with ammunition, and he felt as he advanced that any delay in his forward movement, any hindrance on his way back, might compromise the very existence of his force, and expose it either to perish from hunger, or in incessant skirmishes with a never attainable yet omnipresent harassing enemy.

All that one could conclude, meanwhile, is that as little progress had been made towards the suppression of the insurrection as towards the pacification of the disturbed districts. It was perfectly impossible to believe that the insurgents, if indeed their ranks were as numerous as the Pasha would have given us to understand, even had their losses been as heavy as he described them, could have been greatly discomforted and downcast. Before the month was over, Niksitch must either surrender or a fourth effort must be made to relieve the place—no one knew whether with better or with worse results. That hint of Mukhtar Pasha about the shelter the insurgents had found in the brushwood had a very ominous sound; for their strength hitherto lay in the mountains which made them inaccessible, but, with the spread of the foliage, their safety lay now in the woods which rendered them invisible. We all know how brigandage in Calabria, which seemed to die off in winter with the fall of the leaf, always

evinced some fresh vigour as the country put on its green mantle at the outbreak of spring. According to all probability we might prepare ourselves for a prolonged struggle during the coming months, unless the Government of the Porte, either in its wisdom or yielding to the suggestions of a wise diplomacy, stooped to some compromise, which, while reconciling its rebellious subjects as well as their allies of Montenegro and Servia, might still enable it to maintain a mere shadow of sovereignty over the disaffected territory, and at the same time relieve itself from a continuance of unprofitable warlike efforts, which would equally shatter its finances and exhaust the productive resources of the country.

Nothing could be more striking than the analogy between these hostilities in Herzegovina and the weary warfare the troops of Concha and Serrano kept up during three years with the Carlists in the mountain fastnesses of the Basque Provinces and Navarre. There, also, military operations were for a long time limited to desultory efforts to disengage Bilbao, to relieve Pamplona, to revictual now this, now that, distressed fortress. Success nearly in every case attended similar attempts, but the work had again and again to begin afresh, for it was never undertaken with sufficient patience, foresight, and method, no time was allowed for thorough preparation, and instead of proceeding step by step, maintaining the ground as it was gained, endeavours were

made to obtain an ephemeral advantage by a headlong onset, almost invariably followed by a no less precipitate retreat. After the day in which Raouf Pasha threw provisions for two months into Niksitch, Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha, his successor, marched three times to the rescue of that place. Had he from the beginning moved forward inch by inch, making Kristatz, Islestop, Pressieka, and so on his base of operations, and securing the ground in his rear, he would by this time not only have reached Niksitch, but would have had so firm a hold upon it, as to use it as the best weapon of offence against the insurgents and their auxiliaries. But Turkish commanders evidently knew nothing of the very first rudiments of strategy. They carried on the war without any such thing as an *intendance*, or commissariat. The foolish notion prevailed that their soldiers needed "neither food, nor rest, nor shelter." And truly there was hardly any excess of endurance, hardly any prodigy of valour of which these good, strong men might not be capable under difficulties. There was no discouragement from which their fatalism, their religious resignation, and their devotion to their little-deserving Sovereign would not soon rally them. Pity all these sterling qualities could be of so little avail in the hands of their improvident as well as incompetent leaders! Mukhtar Pasha seemed to find no words sufficiently expressive of his admiration of his soldiers' valour. One would like to know whether

his troops would have been equally eloquent in praise of their General's ability. Who would have thought that more than a twelve month later (June, 1877), there would still be war on the Duga Pass, and that the Turkish commanders should still find it so hard a task to relieve Niksitch ?

CHAPTER XVI.

NOTES AND MEMORANDUMS.

DIPLOMACY IN THE EAST.—THE ANDRASSY NOTE.—DIPLOMATIC ETIQUETTE.—TURKEY AND THE POWERS.—THE PORTE AND THE OPPOSITION.—THE PORTE AND THE INSURGENTS.—THE POLICY OF AUSTRIA.—THE POLICY OF RUSSIA.—THE GORTSCHAKOFF MEMORANDUM.—THE POLICY OF ENGLAND.

WHILE heroic soldiers and incompetent commanders in Herzegovina exerted themselves to bring the rebellious subjects of the Sultan back to their allegiance by might of arms, the European Governments, and especially those of the "three Northern Empires," Russia, Germany, and Austria, were devising the means of restoring order in the disturbed Turkish districts by peaceful negotiation. Early in the autumn of 1875, upon the advice of the Austro-Hungarian Cabinet, and with the consent of the Porte, a Conference of the Consuls of the Six Powers who had signed the Paris Treaty of 1856—France, England, Italy, Austria, Germany, and Russia—was assembled at Mostar; but, as its meeting was contrived without any well-defined object, it could have no decisive result, and it answered indeed no other purpose than that of better acquainting the Go-

vernments with the real character of the insurrection, with the circumstances which had given it rise, the magnitude it might assume, and the perils it would probably involve. Towards the close of the year the Sovereigns and Ministers of the three great Northern Empires became aware of the necessity for more resolute action, and, taking the initiative upon themselves, they came to some agreement on certain propositions to be submitted to the Sublime Porte, upon which the Arch-Chancellor of the Austro-Hungarian Empire drew up that notable document which, under the designation of the "Andrassy Note," gave enough to think and to discuss to all Europe for several months.

Two distinct ideas seemed from the outset to be well established in the minds of European politicians; the one that, whatever might be thought of the instigations of foreign agitators, and of the intrigues of Panslavist Committees, the insurgents in the Turkish provinces had really some just cause of complaint against misgovernment, and were justified in their clamour for reforms; the other, that the six Powers who signed the Paris Treaty had a right and a duty to suggest to, and even to impose those reforms upon the Porte—the right being grounded on the guarantee of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, assumed by the six Powers by the terms of the said treaty, which involved on their part a vigilance over the proceedings of the Government of the Porte, to enable them to guard against any disorders which might

jeopardise that integrity; and the duty arising from the necessity every State is under to provide for its own safety against the spread within its own boundaries of any disorder affecting a neighbour's territory.

Upon the strength of these considerations the Sublime Porte had been, on the first outbreak in Herzegovina, plied with diplomatic recommendations to put her house in order, to listen to her subjects' grievances and to afford them redress; and, as it was whispered that the Powers were themselves inquiring into those grievances, and projecting some scheme of redress, the Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Nedim, acting, as it was asserted, on the advice of General Ignatieff, attempted to be beforehand with them, by putting forth that Imperial Firman of Reforms of December, to which I have alluded in one of the foregoing chapters.* That decree, however, did not limit its provisions to the disturbed districts of Bosnia and Herzegovina; on the contrary, while it professed to be applicable throughout the full extent of the Ottoman Empire, it by an express clause excepted those localities in which rebels were standing in armed opposition against the Sultan's Government. The Andrassy Note, for its own part, seemed meant to do away with that exception; it took up the interests of the revolted provinces, and proposed measures, some of them of a special and local character, which should establish a *modus vivendi* in those disturbed districts, equally meeting

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the requirements of the country and of the Government, and adapted to the circumstances of discordant and mutually hostile fractions of its population.

Count Andrassy's Note having obtained the approval of Berlin and St. Petersburg, was sent to Paris, London, and Rome on the last day of the year 1875. It met with no opposition on the part of any of those Courts, and it was understood that, owing especially to the good offices of England, the Porte would not only accept the proposals of the Powers and give the Note a favourable answer, but even publish a new Firman of Reforms, based on Count Andrassy's suggestions, and specially applicable to the districts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. And yet with every disposition of the parties to be agreeable, the actual presentation of the Note was put off from day to day, and only took place at the end of January. Even then diplomacy took immense trouble to adopt such forms as could spare the *amour propre* of the Ottoman Government, as if to give it to understand that nothing was further removed from the minds of the framers of the Note than the idea of exercising the least pressure on the Porte's deliberations. As this attempt to combine firmness with gentleness, to employ what might seem efficacious means of persuasion without resorting to words or acts which might give offence, was persevered in throughout all subsequent transactions of the Powers in their dealings with the Porte, an account of what took place in this first stage of the negotiations may not be without interest.

Instructions received at Constantinople by the Varna mail induced the representatives of the six Powers to alter the simple plan on which they were previously agreed, and prescribed point by point the ceremonies which were to be observed. Accordingly, on the last day in January, 1876, the Austrian Ambassador proceeded to the Porte and read, or rather seemed to recite by heart, to the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs, Raschid Pasha, the Note, the actual text of which had only reached him twenty-four hours before. At the Minister's request, Count Zichy then left in the Minister's hands copies of the Note, and of the annexed memorandum, and various other documents, on the subject of which informal *pourparlers* had been previously exchanged with the Porte. On that same Monday, her Majesty's Ambassador, Sir Henry Elliot, and after him General Ignatieff and Baron Werther, the Russian and German Ambassadors, as well as Count Corti, Italian Minister, gave their verbal support to the suggestions conveyed by the Note. The French Ambassador, Count Bourgoing, whose despatches only arrived on Monday evening, had to put off his interview with the Minister to the ensuing Tuesday.

It was thus managed that the Note should be "read," not "presented," and "left," not "delivered;" that it should not be a "Collective Note," though it was a common and unanimous act; the six Powers exhibiting, as I said, by such nice diplomatic distinc-

tions their anxiety to spare the susceptibilities of the Porte, and to take from the Note every appearance of actual dictation. But as it had been pre-arranged that the Minister for Foreign Affairs should reply to the proposals communicated to him as soon as they had been by him laid before the Imperial Divan for consideration, it was natural that the Minister should express a wish to have copies of the documents in his hands as an *aide-mémoire*, and his request was readily complied with. The upshot of all these delicate manœuvres was that the Note was virtually presented, that an answer was to be soon forthcoming, and it was understood that this answer would amount to an acceptance of the proposals of the six Powers; the Porte, it was added, being pledged presently to publish in a Firman the programme of the measures by which the pacification of the insurgent districts of Bosnia and Herzegovina was to be effected.

It was understood at the time that the Chancellor of the Russian Empire, Prince Gortschakoff, had advised the delegates of the insurgents in Herzegovina to accept the reforms proposed by Count Andrassy, and to lay down their arms, and the obvious inference was that, while it was deemed that a communication to the Porte could be made more acceptable by coming from Austria, any intimation to the insurgents would make a better impression if conveyed to them by Russia. Hopes for the immediate suspension and for the eventual cessation of

hostilities in the disturbed districts began, therefore, to be confidently entertained, and the weather was just setting fair when ominous clouds again lowered on the political horizon. In the first place, the report circulated that the Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Pasha, was again threatened with dismissal. The position of Mahmoud at the head of the State had never been considered very firm, for the Sultan was supposed to listen to the suggestions of the friends of Hussein Avni Pasha, and, as we have seen, to harbour desperate designs of cutting the knot with the sword by venturing on open war with Montenegro, and thus taking by the horns the bull of the Herzegovinian insurrection—a scheme which met with the strenuous opposition of the Grand Vizier. After the acceptance of the Note, which recommended a more moderate and pacific course, it was thought that a reconciliation between the Sultan and his Grand Vizier had been effected, and the position of Mahmoud Pasha at the direction of affairs was since then considered surer than ever. But the intelligence that the Grand Vizier's seat was trembling under him was again current at this time, and the representatives of the Powers were at no little pains to counteract the influence which the war party were evidently exercising at Court. The dragomans of the Embassies, as the report was, were instructed to proceed to the palace at Dolmabacheh, and there, through the chamberlain of the Sultan, to represent to his Imperial Majesty how inexpedient, if not

dangerous, would at this juncture be the removal from his Council of a Prime Minister with whom important negotiations were pending, and who was fairly entitled to carry out the policy of reform which had been framed and publicly announced in the Sultan's own name. First and foremost in urging these remonstrances, I was assured, was the English Ambassador, who was strenuously supported by all his colleagues, the French, and it was added, the Italian Envoy alone—no one knew for what reason—keeping aloof. It was still doubted, however, whether the Ambassadors' admonition had made any impression on the Sultan's mind, and the Grand Vizier's position was still considered very unsafe, when, to complicate the difficulty, a telegram reached the Government to the effect that "a fresh insurrection had broken out in Bosnia, in the district of Gratshanitza." The telegram entered into no particulars with respect either to the nature or to the importance of the outbreak, but the alarm its arrival created was sufficient to perplex the Sultan's Council, and to shake its confidence in the results of the negotiations aiming at the pacification of the provinces.

It very soon appeared that the long-expected Note had been a mere bugbear from the terrors of which the Porte would find it easy to recover. The Grand Vizier and his colleagues applauded themselves on the policy by which the speedy publication of their Firman of Reforms outstripped the tardy delibera-

tions of the Austrian Chancellor. The Allied Powers had, they contended, no measures of reform to propose that had not been beforehand exceeded by the liberality of the Sultan's spontaneous concessions. All that they might have attempted to impose would have been some scheme of joint guarantees, establishing those concessions as a real and permanent right in behalf of the people, but this, had it even been at all practicable—the Government of the Porte were prepared to resist, and even resent as an actual interference of foreigners in the internal affairs of the empire. They were from the beginning determined to stand up for their independence at all hazards, and rather break than bend, in the full conviction that the Powers were too incapable of any real understanding between themselves to proceed to extremities. I was even at the time positively assured that an intimation had been forwarded by the Porte to the Powers to withdraw their Consuls from Mostar. It is important to take notice of this stubborn disposition of the Porte at this early period, as it actuated all its following resolutions and baffled the best intentions of the Powers for the maintenance of the European peace. The Porte did not acknowledge the Powers' right to interfere in her domestic concerns, and the Powers were never quite of one mind, either as to their possession of such a right, or as to their determination to enforce it.

Towards the middle of the ensuing February the

text of the new Imperial Firman intended to carry out the special reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina was published. These reforms were based on the Five Points of the Andrassy Note, with such modifications as the Porte insisted upon as a condition of its acceptance of the Austro-Hungarian High-Chancellor's proposal. The Five Points themselves, as we all know, were merely a European summary of the new liberties announced by the Ottoman Government in the Firman of last December, which, in its turn, was simply a new version of the Charters of 1839 and 1856. The only new stage to which the matter had now been brought was that, while the Firman of December excluded from the promised reforms the rebels of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Andrassy Note was purposely meant to benefit those two provinces, and suggested those measures which could best lead to their pacification, the Porte expressing its conviction that by adopting those suggestions, it had insured the moral support of the European Powers in her efforts to put an end to the insurrection. Faithful to its engagements, the Porte now, for its own part, promised an amnesty to all those of her subjects who should deserve its clemency by an immediate act of submission.

The next move now rested with the insurgents, and it remained to be seen what influence would be exercised either by the Imperial Commissioners acting in the name of the Porte, or by the representatives of the six Powers, to induce the leaders

of the insurrection to lay down their arms. Some of the diplomatists who in all matters connected with Eastern questions were best entitled to attention, expressed a belief that the full compliance of the insurgents with the intimation now conveyed to them both by friends and enemies might be confidently looked forward to; but other gentlemen, equally authoritative, were less sanguine about the result. In the first place, they thought that the revolt had its roots, not in the disturbed provinces themselves, but in remote regions which no measures of clemency or improvement could affect; and, in the second place, they were convinced that the exasperation caused by the outrages and excesses committed by the contending parties during the late struggle could not fail to leave such mutual ill-will and rancour between them as nothing but the presence of an overwhelming force would allay. Their opinion seemed to be that either the Ottoman Government must regain its ascendency by the strong hand, or else the work of Count Andrassy, which began by diplomatic conciliation, must end by armed intervention. The evils of Turkey, in these gentlemen's opinion, sprang from the ambition of the Slav party in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the chances of a remedy lay in the power the dual Government, of which Count Andrassy was the head, might have, not only of discountenancing the Bosnian and Herzegovinian insurgents, but also of curbing the turbulent passions of the Slav party in its own do-

minions, for of the acquiescence of the Servians and Montenegrins Russia was, or affected to be, perfectly sure.

There were some of the conditions laid down in the Andrassy Note, and accepted in the Imperial Firman, as well as in the Decree of General Amnesty by which it was followed, which the Porte, had it been ever so sincere in its declarations, would not have had the power, and scarcely even the right, to fulfil. These were especially the clause relating to the emancipation of the property from the trammels of feudal tenure and the proportionate allotment of uncultivated land, which was deemed incompatible with the vested rights of the landowners, and that relating to the exclusive application of the sums arising from the collection of the direct taxes to local purposes, and for the benefit of the province in which they were raised, which, it was supposed, would clash with the requirements of the general administration. With respect to the amnesty, also, it was understood that not only would the insurgents suffer no molestation for any past offences, but they should upon their act of submission be restored to their former position, their families being recalled from exile, their houses and churches being rebuilt, and seeds, cattle, implements, and other means being provided, both in kind and money, to support them for a season and to enable them to resume the cultivation of their desolate fields. Vassa Effendi, one of the Imperial Commissioners sent to re-establish social order in those

ravaged and dilapidated districts, declared that "he could not even begin his work unless the Government were willing from the first to incur the expense of a million of money, which any attempt at the fulfilment of such promises would immediately involve." Still greater difficulties arose from the demands put forth by the insurgents respecting the immediate and thorough disarmament of the Mussulman population, the limitation of the armed force which the Government should henceforth quarter in their districts, and their desire that Russian and Austrian agents should be established in the garrison towns—all conditions without which the insurgents and all the Christian population would find themselves utterly at the mercy of the Ottoman Government, and of their Mohammedan fellow-subjects. And their apprehensions for their safety could not be said to be altogether unfounded, inasmuch as Haïdar Pasha, the Imperial Commissioner in Bosnia, in his intercourse with the foreign Consuls at Serajewo, declared very freely that "the population of the disturbed districts had no just grievances, and must look for no redress, that both the Imperial Firmans and the Austrian Note were, in his opinion, mere waste paper, and peace need only be restored with the strong hand."

Greatly as the insurgents might be disappointed at the prospect of the fate that awaited them on their return to their allegiance, it would, nevertheless, be by no means unlikely that they would have abated their demands and desisted from any further contest

if they had seen themselves isolated and forsaken by the Powers which had undertaken to plead their cause. As it happened, however, they flattered themselves that help was at hand, and that the ground they had lost in Herzegovina might be regained by the success of their sympathisers in Bosnia, of whose movements they were sure to be better informed at Ragusa than we could ever hope to be in Constantinople. What had happened in Bosnia was not so much an insurrection of the helpless native population as a downright invasion of Slavic bands from the Austrian districts. Between 5000 and 6000 *Grenzer* or Borderers, had, towards the 10th of April, crossed the frontier from various points; they had gained possession of all Turkish Croatia, overpowered several minor garrisons, established themselves in strong positions, burnt several villages, and scattered like chaff 4000 Bashi-Bazouks, or Volunteer Militia, whom the Vali, or Governor-General of the Province, had sent, ill-armed and equipped, to meet them. The invaders had, as a matter of course, been joined by the Bosnians in large numbers, and even by some of the Mussulmans, whose patriotism as Slavs had apparently got the better of their religious feelings. The invaders were said to be "well and uniformly armed" with breechloaders, and provided with two field-pieces, and both the bands and their leaders proceeded as men not altogether unacquainted with the usages of regular warfare. So much, at least, I

learned from the despatch of Haïdar Pasha, which I was allowed to see, and in which that Imperial Commissioner, after soliciting reinforcements, expressed his opinion that the extreme danger justified extreme measures, and that the only immediate resource consisted in arming the Mussulman population, and proclaiming the "Holy War." Haïdar Pasha did not mention that among the causes which had determined the movement was the provocation given by the Ottoman troops, and by some of the Mussulmans, who, at the very moment attempts were made to bring about the pacification of the province, abandoned themselves to the most savage excesses—the violation of women and the murder in cold blood of fugitives who had ventured to return to their homes on the faith of the imperial amnesty—thereby adding to the large account of mutual outrages by which the revengeful passions of both parties, Moslem and Giaour, were perpetually aggravated and deepened. Of these horrible deeds detailed reports occurred in the Consular correspondence, which were also laid before me, and which I could quote to the letter, were not some of the atrocities of so dark a dye that I should probably incur the charge of exaggeration among civilised readers.*

* No bad sample of the manner in which the work of pacification was likely to be carried on might be seen in the tragic catastrophe of which the village of Wukowich, near Bilesch, had just been the theatre. That village, we were told, had taken no part in the insurrection, yet the Mussulmans fell suddenly, on April 1st, on its inoffensive inhabitants, and slaughtered defenceless men and

Haïdar Pasha did not hesitate to lay the whole blame of this new inroad on the Austro-Hungarian Government, and the animosity against Vienna and Pesth was consequently very strong among the Turks in Constantinople. How it happened, in fact, that so deeply laid a movement, the simultaneous march of so many detached bands of armed men across a well-guarded frontier, could be organised and carried out without the connivance of General Rodich and the other civil and military authorities of Dalmatia and Slavonia, it seemed difficult to understand; it could only be explained either by the supposition that those authorities, with Rodich at their head, shared the sympathies of their Slav subjects with the Slav insurgents in Turkey, or that these sympathies were strong enough to baffle their vigilance and defy their power. In either case, the position of the Austro-Hungarian Government was seriously compromised; and the evidence of their helplessness and perplexity might be argued from the fact that, although General Rodich was well known as the head of the Slav party in Austria, acting throughout in contradiction to the views and interests, if not to the actual orders, of the Andrassy Government, this very Government, instead of ar-

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women, carrying off their severed heads as trophies on the points of their pikes. The intelligence of these fresh atrocities was sent by telegraph to one of the Embassies in Constantinople. The Grand Vizier professed that he knew nothing about it, and refused to credit the report.

resting and prosecuting him as an unfaithful servant, when they recalled him to Vienna, sent him back charged with that pacification which was meant to discountenance Slavic aspirations. The Vienna Government would seem to have evinced a want of foresight which the Turks, in their present sullen mood, were very naturally disposed to impute to bad faith.

There was still a possibility that the Government of the Porte might succeed both in overcoming all resistance on the part of the insurgents in Herzegovina and also in driving back the invaders from the districts of Turkish Croatia and Bosnia, and no one could foresee to what extent the efforts and sacrifices by which the Turks might obtain the victory might also urge them to abuse it. But there was, besides, a chance either of the enemies of the Ottoman Power gaining the upper hand or of the struggle being inexorably prolonged; and, in either case, it behoved Austria and Russia, as well as the other Powers, to consider what course it might be fitting for them to pursue; for, on the one hand, the occupation of Herzegovina and Bosnia by a large Austrian force—say of 50,000 or 60,000 men—seemed indicated and urged by all the exigencies of common humanity; and, on the other hand, it was difficult to foresee whether the movement of this army could be so swift, and its steadiness and compactness so firmly relied upon, as to ensure that it should arrive in time to re-establish order, and

that its presence should not rather add to than check and discountenance disorder. The Slav element, it must be remembered, was as strong in the Austrian army as in the Austrian monarchy; and during this very last inroad of the Slav bands into Turkish Croatia, a collision occurred between the Turkish troops in garrison at Novi and the Austrian post across the border at Dwor, in which, owing to some misunderstanding about their mutual intentions, shots were exchanged, and three of the Turks were killed.

Supposing, however, the occupation of a large Turkish province by a whole Austrian army to have the effect of preventing the further effusion of blood and quelling the rebellious spirit of the subjects of the Porte, to what endless variety of complications would it not have given rise? It could scarcely be looked upon as anything less than the opening of the Eastern Question. "What could be done with the subjugated province? On what terms could it be brought back to its allegiance to the Sultan? What *modus vivendi* could be contrived between the Mussulman and Christian inhabitants? What indemnity or compensation would be allowed to Austria for the trouble and expense of her occupation? How long would that occupation have to be continued? On the other hand, should Austria be allowed to seize and annex that province? Could its possession suit her convenience, and would Russia raise no objection to it? Or, again, suppose that the Powers

could wrest Turkey's consent to the independence of that province; that Bosnia and Herzegovina were erected into a tributary principality on the same terms as Servia and Roumania, could the semi-savage population of those districts be at once considered fit for self-government, and would Mussulmans and Christians, so lately aglow with implacable and internecine rancour, settle down into a peaceful community, and lie down side by side as members of a happy family? Would not, moreover, the success of their revolt stir up envy and emulation among the population of the other Christian districts of European Turkey? Would not insurrection in Bulgaria, Thessaly, Albania, etc., become a chronic complaint, fraught with the eventual dissolution and extinction of the Ottoman Empire?"

These were some of the questions which immediately presented themselves to statesmen and politicians in Constantinople the moment pressing events turned men's attention to the immediate future. There was no popular movement, however in itself insignificant, that did not loom portentously in the imagination of the terrified Osmanli. The Turks knew that there was something anomalous in their constitution, something morbid in their body politic; they were aware that their very existence rested on the superposition of one race upon another, on that sovereignty of the Moslem over the Giaour which was established by force, which force could no longer maintain, and for which no other political

contrivance could nowadays be substituted. There was no Turk who did not feel that his Empire could not be other than it was, and that it must consequently cease to be. The Turk felt that his fate had overtaken him; but he was not for all that disposed to submit to it without a struggle. He was determined to die hard, and to leave little cause for rejoicing to those who had compassed his end.

The power to settle her own affairs had gone from the hands of Turkey, and it remained to be seen what her neighbours could or would do to lighten her difficulties or to aggravate them. It was, in the first place, quite apparent that, notwithstanding the pressure exercised by the six Powers, or by Austria and Russia in their name, upon the Prince of Servia and Montenegro, the attitude of those two principalities became, as the spring advanced, every day less reassuring. The obstinacy with which the Porte had set itself against any concession, by which Montenegro might be won over, disregarding in this respect the constant advice and even the urgent entreaties of Russia and General Ignatieff, had the effect of removing any jealousy existing between that little mountain state and Servia. The necessity of promoting a common cause prevailed over all considerations of separate interests. It brought about a better understanding among all the former vassals of the Porte; and though their Governments, awed by diplomacy, might consider themselves bound to keep the peace, they would, as subsequent expe-

rience proved, find it difficult to allay the active sympathies or curb the adventurous spirit of their subjects. That in sheer self-defence Turkey had a clear *casus belli* against the two princes, and especially against Montenegro, no true man could deny; but in order to make war it is not enough for a State to have a right to do so; and one must consider not only the immediate, but also the remote consequences of such a step. The Young Turkey party, and especially the friends of Hussein Avni Pasha, did not fail to express their regret that they were not listened to when they recommended that the bull should be seized by the horns, and that hostilities against the insurgents should begin by a direct and immediate onset upon the territory of Prince Nicholas. The ex-Grand Vizier, Hussein Avni Pasha, who looked upon his appointment as Governor at Broussa as a kind of banishment, bestowed little attention upon the affairs of his province, and spent his time at sporting parties, which enabled him to send loads of pheasants and other game to influential friends at the Dolmabacheh Palace, to keep up his interest there, and prepare the day in which he might be recalled as the man of the situation; the only man who, when diplomacy should acknowledge itself defeated, would be able to restore the Sultan's authority in the North-Western provinces, with as much ease as he nine years before had stifled the last sparks of Hellenic revolt in Crete. Admiral Hobart Pasha, who was with Hussein at that juncture

and whose spirited conduct contributed in no small degree to the pacification of the island, was even now among the warmest advisers of decisive measures, and he renewed, for the third time, and always in vain, his offer to take the field at the head of a naval brigade of 3000 men, and try what rockets and grenades in the hands of experienced seamen could effect towards dislodging the Herzegovinian insurgents and their Montenegrin allies from their mountain fastnesses.

But the time for desperate resolutions had not yet come, and Hussein and Hobart, and all who had faith in them, were scouted as madmen. The Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Nedim, was not to be moved by suggestions of a hazardous policy. Faithful to Ignatieff and Russia, to whose influence he had, as we have seen, been indebted for the support of the other Powers, and for his continuance in office, he trusted that Osmanli perseverance would enable the Government to achieve the subjugation of the revolted provinces, and was determined to avoid a collision with Servia and Montenegro, which, in his opinion, could not fail to lead to conflicts with far more redoubtable adversaries; for Mahmoud Nedim belonged to the school of old Turkish politicians, who thought that the Moslem had an enemy in every Giaour, and that the Cross would always be ready to join in a league against the Crescent, while, on the contrary, the Young Turkey party, who looked up to Midhat as its leader, stood upon the principle that combination or

good understanding between the Christian Powers was an impossibility, and that Turkey could never engage in a contest with one of them without being sure of the support of the others. "*Premente Deo, fert Deus alter opem.*" And it must be borne in mind that Mahmoud was under Russian, Midhat under English influence.

"Should it become necessary to proceed to extremities," the Grand Vizier said, "it is not with such contemptible foes as Servia and Montenegro that our quarrel would have to be settled, or at least not with them alone."

For poor old Mahmoudoff, who, deservedly or not, was looked upon as the merest passive tool in the hand of Russia, Turkey had no neighbour whose attitude seemed fraught with more mischief and danger than Austria. A feeling unfriendly to the rulers of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy had sprung up at Constantinople from the very beginning of the Herzegovinian difficulty. People who still took an interest in the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and who thought the present calamities and the gloomy prospects of Turkey lay in the overwhelming influence and in the unswerving ambition of Russia, could not help viewing with discouragement the wavering and equivocal conduct of that Government of Vienna, or Pesth, the very existence of which, they thought, was compromised by the growing disorder of the provinces of European Turkey. On the other hand, those who looked upon Turkey's

case as hopeless, wondered why Austria exerted herself diplomatically in behalf of a doomed state, why she was heaping notes upon notes, and protocols upon protocols, when the policy pointed out to her by her "manifest destinies," should have been to forestall Russia in her designs upon Constantinople, and to profit by any disturbance in the Danubian provinces to extend her dominions along that river and down to its very mouth. It was of course an article of faith with all politicians in Turkey that Russia coveted Constantinople and the Straits, and that the keenness of her desire was only increased by the necessity she was in of dissembling her aim and delaying its gratification. The more Russia argued, and disclaimed, and protested, the less credit she gained for the disinterestedness of her intentions. "The grapes may be sour," everybody said, "but they are ripening in the sun of every day that passes. Were even the Czar's Government sincere, it would be utterly powerless to resist national aspirations. Russia will never renounce her hope of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles till she ceases to be Russia."

"It is true," it was added, "that the way to Constantinople need not be across the Danube and over the Balkan. Russia can creep all round along the shores of the Black Sea as easily as she could march across Bulgaria and Roumelia. She might leave the plain of the Danube untouched, or she might even agree to share its broad expanse with her

Austrian and German accomplices. Still, the strength of an empire possessing nearly the whole coast of the Black Sea, with its only outlet, would be something appalling to all the neighbouring states, nor would it be possible for any Power to hold the Straits without extending its sway to at least large strips of coasts on both sides of the Sea of Marmora. Constantinople would be of no use to Russia, except as a centre of a Europeo-Asiatic empire; and such of the states in either continent as escaped her actual occupation would, at least, have to bow to her overwhelming influence, and be altogether at her discretion."

Under such circumstances it was evident that Germany and Austria could not be now, or would not long continue to be, of one mind with Russia in their dealings with the Eastern Question; and, indeed, there were flagrant proofs enough of their mutual distrust to convince any man that they were only acting together to watch, and endeavour to thwart, each other.

The charming bluntness with which Prince Bismarck caused the hair of old diplomatists' wigs to stand on end, when he recommended Austrian statesmen to "move eastwards," *i. e.* from Vienna to Pesth, to Belgrade, or even farther, was the theme of all men's discourse. Why should not Austria outstrip Russia in the race? Why should not the Hapsburg rather than the Romanoff sit on the throne of the Byzantine Cæsars, and aspire to the construction

of that *Oester-reich,* or Eastern Empire, which seemed foreshadowed in the very name of their original state?

"Not more than thirty years ago," these politicians reasoned, "Vienna was considered almost a match for St. Petersburg, and it seemed certain that in any design upon Turkey, Russia would find an insurmountable barrier so long as Austria could be arrayed against her on the Danube. After 1866, however, gloomy days arose for the House of Hapsburg. Defeat abroad and division at home drove it from Italy, estranged it from Germany, and weakened it by that dualism which satisfied one of its subject races at the expense of all others. To regain its compactness, to recover its ascendency, to fulfil the destinies which point to the East as the theatre of its future greatness, the House of Hapsburg must make itself Slav; it must take the lead of the Southern Panslavic movement. It need not deprive its German or its Magyar subjects of that home rule which was secured to them by the compact of 1867; but justice must be done to those nationalities which at that time were sacrificed to German or Hungarian ambition. The Empire must be converted into an aggregate of self-governing communities, with no other bond between them than a central administration and personal union. Dualism must be considered merely as a first step towards further division and sub-division. Room must be made in the confederate State for Croatians, Dalmatians, Slovenians, as well

as for Roumanians, Servians, Bosnians, Bulgarians, etc. The new Oester-reich will thus absorb, one after another, all the Turkish provinces, and end by making its way to its new capital. What Russia could only accomplish by conquest, Austria might easily achieve by assimilation."

Such was the construction it seemed natural to put on that hint of Prince Bismarck as to the expediency of Austria shunting eastwards. She could win at the mouth of the Danube more than she might yet have to lose near its sources. It might he objected that the Slav provinces of Turkey, and especially those which had already achieved semi-independence, might feel little disposed to transfer to the Hapsburg such allegiance as they still owed to the Porte; that the Servians, the Montenegrins, and especially the Roumans—who are not Slavs—all of whom had already reigning Princes at their head, would not be easily brought to acknowledge a new bond of Imperial supremacy; but, in the first place, their admission to a Confederate State need not be effected on terms incompatible with their autonomy; and in the second place, the alternative for them might be between becoming Austrians and becoming Russians, and their sympathies would lie rather with the Southern Slavs of Austria than with the Northern Slavs of Russia, should the House of Hapsburg show any disposition to do justice to its Slav subjects.

It might be answered that such speculations referred to remote contingencies, but it is the duty of

statesmen, even if they do nothing to hasten or mature events, at least to be prepared for them. The Government of Vienna had to deal with a difficult situation, and seemed at a loss how to understand and master it. Swayed almost exclusively by Hungarian interests, and blinded by an almost rabid dread of Slavism, the Andrassy Cabinet committed the double error of considering it a duty to preserve the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and of thinking itself able to accomplish it. It was, however, powerless in its endeavours to keep a good watch on its frontier, and to restrain the zeal of its Slavic subjects, Dalmatians, Croatians, etc., who looked upon the cause of the Herzegovinian insurgents as their own; powerless to remove from his Government at Ragusa that General Rodich, to whom indeed in spite of his well-known Slavonic sympathies, the charge of dealing diplomatically with the insurgents for the settlement of their differences had again and again to be entrusted. The real fact was that Rodich was nearly as powerful in the Aulic Council at Vienna as Andrassy himself; the fact was that there was not one Austria, but two Austrias; that the Emperor Francis had two ears, with one of which he listened to the outspoken advice of his Magyar Arch-Chancellor, while with the other he attended to the whisperings of Rodich's partisans, among whom, besides the Slavs and the friends of the Slavs, were some of the Archdukes, Generals, Ministers, etc., Germans, many of them, but aristocrats, Conserva-

tives and Federalists above all things. The Cabinet of Count Andrassy found it almost impossible to hold its own against the Slavic element over which the dualism of 1867 gave it an unnatural preponderance. It was only in normal times and in a profound peace that the German in the Cisleithan and the Magyar in the Transleithan division of the Hapsburg Monarchy could hope to rule over those motley subject races, each of which was hitherto powerless in itself, but all of which were now awaking to the consciousness of strength in their united majority. While Count Andrassy wavered between his Hungarian predilections and his sense of the general interests of the empire, there was no lack of private and irresponsible advisers who played upon the vacillating mind and the vague aspirations of the Emperor Francis Joseph, who, like many of his German magnates of the Schwarzenberg school, only yielded to the Magyars and accepted the dualism of 1867 as a fatal consequence of the disaster at Sadowa, while in his heart of hearts he always looked on the Hungarians as a disturbing element, and cherished a fond remembrance of that old compact empire of which his own trusty Germans were the head, and his devoted Slavs the right arm. How could it be otherwise? Can a man divest himself of all the associations of the past? Were not Kossuth and his Hungarians in arms against their sovereign at the time of the Kaiser's accession to the throne in

1849, and was not the monarchy at that juncture saved by Jellachich and his Croatians?

It is no wonder if, in such a situation, Count Andrassy was from beginning to end perplexed, and even stultified. The scheme of a pacification of the disturbed Turkish provinces conveyed in his Note having foundered against the stubborn attitude of the insurgents, Andrassy proceeded to Berlin to bear a hand in the drawing up of the Gortschakoff Memorandum, which is the same thing as to say that Austria, having failed in the negotiation in which she took the initiative, was now only too glad to allow Russia to take the lead. A great stress was laid about this time on the might of the three great Northern Empires, who, we were told, "were leagued for peace, and were fully able, as they were determined, to maintain it." The Czar and the Emperor William, especially, were described as "the best of friends, and so long as they were united, Europe could have no other will than their own." Even big Emperors, in our days however, count for much less than they themselves or other people imagine. There was, is, and ever will be, jealousy and antipathy, and a world-wide antagonism of interests, between the Russian and the German nations. However latent the feeling may be in normal times, it could not fail to break out on the first approach of war; and it found an utterance, as we shall see, in Prince Bismarck's speech on the first intimation of Russia's intention to proceed to *voies*

de fait against Turkey. People are somewhat apt to forget that the State of which Bismarck is the head is no longer Prussia, a little kingdom with no other outlet than in the Baltic and the North Sea. It is now Germany, an empire stretching from the ocean to the Bavarian Alps, and almost as much concerned in the free navigation of the Danube as in that of the Rhine. In this respect the interests of Berlin and those of Vienna have become identical since 1870, and Austria could go any length in her opposition to Russia, sure, as Bismarck himself declared, that Germany would in any emergency back her. The policy of Austria and Germany, throughout the whole of 1875-6, in allowing Russia to play her own game, especially with respect to her protection of Servia and Montenegro, seemed deplorably and inexplicably short-sighted; but it has become more intelligible as events developed themselves. We have learnt that if Czars and Kaisers propose, the people dispose, and that when the subjects become clamorous for war, no other course is open even to an absolute Sovereign than to declare it.

Count Andrassy, however, aspired to the glory of a peace-maker, and insisted upon his arduous task with a zeal which entitled him to greater success than he ultimately achieved. He repaired to Berlin, on the invitation of the Emperor Alexander, and took a prominent part in those Berlin Conferences in which the three Emperors and their Ministers discussed and adopted the Gortschakoff Memoran-

dum. This new document had, at least, an advantage over the Andrassy Note, that it attempted to place such reforms as might be acceptable to the Porte under something that might amount to a joint European guarantee. By the time the Conference came to some conclusion, however, matters in Turkey had been brought to a crisis, which gave an altogether new turn to her home and foreign policy, and England had assumed with respect to the Eastern question that attitude which involved her in endless inconsistencies and contradictions. Our examination of the foreign relations of Turkey, our review of European notes and protocols, must therefore break up at this juncture, to be resumed when the narrative of events shall have made us more thoroughly acquainted with the circumstances by which the deliberations of the European councils were affected. Suffice it for the present to state that England, who had approved of the Andrassy Note, and taken the utmost pains to induce the Government of the Porte to accept it, now refused to sanction with her support the Gortschakoff Memorandum, to which the other five Guaranteeing Powers had signified their assent, and thereby emboldened the Porte flatly to reject it.

Many people thought that her Majesty's Government acted on that occasion with unnecessary precipitancy, and that they condemned the Memorandum without bestowing sufficient attention upon it simply out of a deep-rooted jealousy of, and antipathy to, the

Power whose Minister was the author of it. Not a little of the mischief that followed might, as we shall have occasion to see, be ascribed to this first rash and inconsiderate resolution. The whole world, not excepting even England's most envious and hostile neighbours, had been forced to applaud the stroke of policy—*coup d'état* or *coup de bourse* by which Great Britain had bought up more than half the shares of the Suez Canal, thereby gaining the mastery over the navigation of the Canal itself, insuring in her favour the shortest and most direct communication with her Asiatic possessions, and at the same time establishing over Egypt such an ascendency as could easily be turned to good purposes in any complication to which the development of the Eastern question might give rise. Having achieved that much, it seemed as if the action of England with respect to that question might be most advantageously limited to wise efforts to maintain peace, and to watch for every opportunity which might enable her to thwart Russian ambition. Yet it will not be difficult to prove by-and-by, that the outbreak of the war on the Danube and in Armenia, and the consequences it may eventually have, should complete success crown the Russian arms, must be traced to the first mistake the Derby-Disraeli Cabinet committed in too abruptly and peremptorily rejecting the Gortschakoff Memorandum, the said Cabinet having in the meantime no proposal of its own to bring forward in its stead.

CHAPTER XVII.

TURKISH SHAMS AND DELUSIONS.

DEALINGS OF THE PORTE WITH FOREIGN POWERS.—WHITE AND BLACK SLAVERY.—HAREM LIFE.—THE DOCTOR AND THE SLAVE-MERCHANT.—TAXES AND TAX-GATHERERS.—TURKISH EQUALITY.—AT THE POLLS.—IN THE COURTS OF JUSTICE.—TURKISH CRIMINALS AND TURKISH JUDGES.—THE PERA MURDERS.—THE MURDER AT BROUSSA.—THE SALONICA MURDERS.

ANY man endowed with strong powers of imagination, and thereby enabled to place himself in another's position, will often have wondered how the Sultan, or any of his Mohammedan subjects, from the highest to the lowest, must feel, when they see the ease and coolness with which mere strangers—Ambassadors, Consuls, or Consular Agents—take upon themselves to dictate the law to Turkey and the Turkish Government. "Is the Osmanli dirt? Is not the Padishah the King of Kings? Had he even lost the control which Allah gave him over the rest of the universe—should he not at least be master in his own house? Should not his claim to independence be as fully admitted as that of the Czar, or of either of the Kaisers? Why should the 'Shadow

of God' be pestered with Notes and Memorandums? How can Giaour statesmen, or hat-wearing protocolists be better judges of the grievances of the Christian subjects of the Porte, or of the measures by which their wrongs may be redressed, than the Moslem rulers who have been able to keep the peace among them for four or five hundred years? In what other country but Turkey do we hear of religious zeal being made a pretext for political interference? Where else do the citizens of one State claim exemptions and privileges based on the demands of a foreign Protectorate."

The answer to this is easy, whether we look for it among the principles of modern international legislation, or whether we refer it to the old practice of the law of the strongest. Turkey is not an independent State, not in the sense in which that word is applied to Russia or Germany, England or France. Turkey is a guaranteed, *i.e.* a protected State; as such the Guaranteeing or Protecting Powers have distinct rights upon, as well as well-defined duties towards her.

But, even setting aside all treaties and the obligations arising from them, the meddling of one or more States with the concerns of another State may be justified by considerations relating to the public peace, or by the promptings of humanity. Every country is interested in the suppression of such disorders among its neighbours as may compromise its own safety; just as every householder may object to

any explosive or combustible material being stored up in too large a quantity and in too great a proximity to his own premises. Moreover, we are all men, and it cannot be expected of us that we should stand by and see our fellow-beings subjected to too cruel a treatment, so long as we think that either our entreaties and remonstrances, or even a recourse to more cogent arguments, and to actual force, may stay the hand that inflicts wanton torture.

There is therefore to a certain extent, and under certain conditions, a right inherent in all human societies, as well as in individuals, to step in for the redress of extreme wrongs, and for the repression and even punishment of the wrong-doer; the only point that is difficult to settle is, when and where it is that interference may be allowable; or, more correctly, where it is that it may be available; for we must not, with our best intentions to do good, run the risk of making matters worse, as happened to Don Quixote, when, at the very outset of his knight-errantry, he took up the championship of the servant-boy, Andrés, compelling his unjust master to promise to pay the lad the sixty-three reals he owed him, little foreseeing in what "perfumed" coin, as soon as his knightly back was turned, the payment would be made. Greatly as all Europe was incensed against that government of King Bomba, which had been stigmatised as "the negation of God," there was hardly any man of sense who did not praise the forbearance of the French and English

Governments when, in 1858, after having ordered their fleets to Naples with some vague design of chastising the tyrant's arrogance and contumacy, they thought better of it, countermanded their order, and abandoned the Bourbon dynasty to the fate which was at no distant period to overtake it.

In the case of Turkey, many of the European Governments, and especially that of Russia on the one side, and those of England and France on the other, have shown little hesitation in pressing their views and wishes upon the Porte, whenever they deemed it expedient, vindicating their right to interfere and to impose their good pleasure by every means either of persuasion or of actual coercion. It was thanks to European meddling, and, it must unfortunately be added, "muddling," that a series of insurrections of the Christian population led to the total or partial emancipation of Greece, Walachia, and Moldavia, Servia, the Lebanon, Samos, etc.; the Powers by diplomatic action, and even by might of arms, conspiring to weaken and dismember the Ottoman Empire, and then repenting their own deeds, calling their own victories "untoward events," shedding crocodile tears at the prospect of that empire's final dissolution, and even entering into rash engagements to prevent or at least to retard its downfall at all hazards.

Placed at the discretion of these overbearing States, unable fully to comprehend the ever-changing drift of their policy, the Porte learnt how to

evade by subterfuge the demands which she durst not meet with open denial. That phrase "To hear is to obey," with which every Ottoman subject is ever ready to receive the Sultan's behest, whatever it may be, became the form with which the Divan or the Foreign Office at Constantinople, answered any request or suggestion of European statesmen. A proposal of any foreign power was first accepted and examined afterwards. Was there a political prisoner to be set free, a tax to be remitted, a school to be opened, a Pasha to be removed from office? "Hey, presto! It must be done; it will be sure to be done; nay, it is *done!*" And, to be sure, if anything could be accomplished either by publishing a Firman, or appointing a commission, or instituting an inquiry, holding a Council of Ministers, or in any other manner deliberating as to the *quid agendum*, or the *quomodo agendum*, till the affair had gone through every stage of the "Circumlocution Office," no man would have had reason to complain of the Porte's non-compliance with any reasonable, or even unreasonable request. Somehow, however, it soon became manifest that this readiness of the Turkish rulers to fall in with the desires of foreign potentates or of their representatives was mere sham and pretence; simply the result of Oriental mock humility and lip-courtesy: the thing that was "as good as done" was never actually *done;* the Firman extorted from Sultan or Vizier remained a dead letter; the tax that was to be remitted was rigidly exacted, and

sometimes aggravated; the prisoner who was to be liberated passed from one prison to another, often from a bad prison into a worse; the Pasha who was to be dismissed was only transferred from place to place, mayhap promoted to a better place: the appointed commission sat day after day, week after week, the inquiry was prolonged for months, and never came to a conclusion; the Ministerial Council discussed and debated till a crisis, or the death of the Sultan or some other providential dispensation broke up their deliberations, and the subject dropped; he who was waiting for their decision either being worn out by long waiting, or through forgetfulness, or in sheer despair, giving up the unattainable object.

It was thus by granting everything in words and denying everything in deeds, that the Government of the Porte, especially after the Crimean war, contrived to send foreign Ambassadors, and especially those of England and France—those of the Powers who had fought Turkey's battles—empty away. The Ambassadors themselves, in many instances, out of mere jealousy of each other's influence, backed the Turks in their tricks by their guilty collusion; they endorsed their lies, winked at their pretences, and wrote flaming despatches to their Governments, announcing as granted, settled, ordered, and *done*, what had never been, and what they knew perfectly well could or would never be done. Turkish Ministers and European Envoys conspired to throw dust into

people's eyes, and to perpetuate the system of barefaced deception.

The Sultan's subjects were not as easily imposed upon as people at a distance; and when Hatts or Irades appeared ushering in unbounded schemes of reform, they were reminded of the different mood in which a certain personage when he "gets well" looks upon the rash resolutions he came to when he "was sick," and they could quote numerous instances of engagements entered into by the Government of the Porte under foreign pressure which came to nothing when that pressure was removed, the remonstrances of the Powers being met either with subtle evasion or with bold, open defiance.

Look, for instance, at the question of slavery and the slave trade. The good and gentle but weak Sultan Abd-ul-Medjid required the help of France and England, when threatened with Russian invasion in 1854, and in a Firman published in October of that year, addressed "A toi, mon Vizir," he discovered that "L'homme est la plus noble de toutes les créatures sorties des mains de Dieu, qui l'a destiné à être heureux, en lui accordant la grâce de naître naturellement libre." His pious feelings and his humane instinct were equally shocked to hear that "certain persons in Circassia and Georgia were selling their children and other relatives into slavery, and even kidnapping other people's children, selling them like cattle and common merchandise." He is determined to put an end to this "blamable and abominable

practice, equally repugnant to honour and humanity," and directs his Minister to inflict severe punishment upon both the buyer and seller of human flesh. At a later time—January, 1857—in a Firman addressed to the Pasha of Egypt, and to the authorities throughout the Ottoman dominions, the same Sultan finds out that the measures respecting the prohibition of the Negro slave-trade have been of no effect, and that "a great number of these slaves during the journey from their country to the coast perish from the fatigues and hardships they are exposed to in the deserts, while the remainder, owing to their passage from warm to cold climates, become subject to pulmonary and other diseases, by which means most of them are cut off from the enjoyment of life at an early age." Thereupon his Majesty again enjoins his Vizier to seek out and punish the guilty, and put an end to the outrageous traffic with the strong hand. Upon the strength of those sovereign orders the Minister gave instructions that all vessels plying in the Black Sea and along the African coasts should be searched, that such slaves, white or black, as might be found on board should be instantly manumitted, and at their own choice either sent back to their homes or provided with free employment; further, that all who had a hand in the trade should be liable to the penalty of a year's imprisonment, to be doubled on any and every repetition of the offence. To the fulfilment of all these reforms the Government of the Porte solemnly pledged itself in a despatch addressed

by Edhem Pasha to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, dated January 29, 1857 ; and several years later Sir Henry Bulwer took upon himself to assure her Majesty's Government that the conditions to which the Porte had bound itself were fulfilled, and that slavery was at an end throughout the Sultan's dominions, though a gentleman from the Foreign Office who was at Constantinople in 1869 was satisfied by ocular evidence that slaves, both black and white, were still sold and bought with very little reserve in the immediate vicinity of the Suleymanyeh, or Solyman's mosque. The trade, besides, continued to be carried on the north side of the Golden Horn, near the Top-haneh or Artillery Arsenal, and has only lately, and in consideration of the feelings of the prying Franks, been removed to the Koom Capoo, or Sand Gate, a quarter inhabited by Circassians, on the far side of Stamboul, on the Sea of Marmora.

Since the advance of Russia on the region of the Caucasus has either led to the subjugation or emigration of the Circassians, the recruiting of wives for the wealthy Turks can only be carried on under difficulties, and the commerce is reduced to a profitable but rather petty retail trade. The business is generally managed as follows. A Moslem dealer, agent, or broker, travels to the happy land where beauty and virtue may be bought, guaranteed first hand. He makes choice of four young unsophisticated girls, marries them, imports them to Constantinople,

keeps them as pure as when they were in their maternal homes, divorces them, sells them, and then goes back for another "lot;" and if he can only achieve four such trips in a year, he can make a decent living out of sixteen women—a noble, self-denying, and useful trade, tolerated by the Government and consistent with the Mohammedan code. Many of the Circassians are settled in Turkey, and there actually breed children for sale, having no more shame about it than a worldly English mother may feel about bringing out her girls for the matrimonial market. The Circassian however does not care for rank or family connections, but for hard cash. Fatima is knocked down to a Bey or a Pasha, her father takes his baksheesh, and the girl becomes the mistress of a harem till her successor arrives. It can meanwhile be positively assured that there are in Stamboul as many as four and twenty houses where the sale of Circassian and other girls is freely carried on. Young Shamyl, the son of the renowned Circassian hero, who lived as a guest at the Russian Embassy, told me, as the most natural thing in the world, that at one of these beauty shops he was offered a first-rate article, for which he was asked 350 Turkish lire, and he offered 150 lire, when the bargain broke down simply because the slave merchant did not allow the would-be purchaser to take the merchandise home with him for a week on trial.

That the supply of wives for the wealthy Turks should be procured by such means is the almost

necessary consequence of the seclusion to which the sex in every condition of life is doomed. One cannot walk half an hour about the streets of Stamboul without being struck with the prodigious ugliness of whatever may be seen of the complexion, features, and figures of those clumsy bundles of clothes in which the females of the lower classes are swathed. Denied all air and exercise, the women of a better class can develop none of those charms which are the results of blooming health. In a country where there grows no beauty for home consumption, men must needs be dependent on foreign supplies; and as a Turk cannot, owing to the peculiar institutions of Islam, hope to win an alien wife for love, he is content to get one or more for money. He has in his sovereign the example of a man who is debarred from marriage (who that is since the days, I believe, of Bayazet II., owing to some mischance happening to his harem, is not allowed to have a lawful wife, but has his choice of slaves without number) and to whom when one of these slaves—the favourite one, whom Europeans in their ignorance call his wife—promises to be a mother, a present of two fresh slaves is made by an obsequious Vizier. It is very edifying to hear the Sultan descanting on "the inherent right to freedom to which man, as the noblest of created beings, is entitled," but all the women in his palace, the Validé herself not excepted, had become members of his family by purchase or gift, and without being consulted as to their wishes.

It is not without a shuddering and sickening horror that one hears European doctors employed in the palace give their account of the treatment the greatest number of the female slaves shut up there have to endure under brutal eunuch government. One of them assured me that of these bondswomen, whether we call them wives, concubines, or attendants on the wives and concubines belonging to the Sultan, or to the multitude of princes of the blood, Court favourites or servants, "the consumption was very large." Pressed for an explanation, he said that "few of these women lived long; used and cast aside after a season or two, unless they become mothers, when they acquire certain rights: forbidden ever afterwards the indulgence of those passions which had been purposely stimulated and quickened, and eating their hearts in disappointment, humiliation, and unappeased longings—doomed to do the drudgery of the houses where they have reigned as sovereign beauties, in cold rooms, with insufficient clothing, and no fires; they waste away to such an extent, that," the doctor thought, "eighty per cent. would represent the number who died under thirty years of age." A lady friend of mine, who had once an opportunity of going through some of the cold passages of the palace in which these wretched women were washing clothes for the harem, on her way to see one of the wives of a prince, declared to me that "the sight haunted her ever afterwards as an evil dream."

It may, again, be argued that the internal domes-

tic and social arrangements of a State are no concern of other States, and that the Porte has good reason to resent all interference with the administration of its subjects as unwarrantable impertinence; but that is the very reason why the Sultan's subjects evince so little faith in the efficiency either of Imperial Firmans or of Diplomatic Notes; because they are convinced that neither Firmans nor Notes can be more binding upon their Sovereign than the promises to which himself and his predecessors have so often bound themselves, and that his pledge will as readily be broken to any Power who may send in Note after Note, as they have invariably been broken to the Sultan's subjects themselves.

The mistake lies in dealing with Turkey as a European State, and amenable to European rule. Turkey is no more European than Morocco, the only difference being that Constantinople and the Straits give the Ottoman Empire a position which was for a long time supposed to interest Europe in the preservation of its independent existence. For all that, it will always be easier to oust Turkey from her European position than to bring her to abolish slavery or any other of those abuses which have driven her subjects to rise in arms against her.

That even the constant supply of Circassian and Georgian slaves has little effect towards improving the breed of Turkish women we may argue from the specimens of the "flowers of the harems"—fine types of womanhood as they originally are—whom

we see driving up and down the Grand Rue de Pera, especially on a Friday afternoon. On this their weekly holiday these lovely beings do not disdain to parade their charms before the despised Giaours, the gossamer texture of their yashmaks allowing one to descry their features as if that mere sham of a disguise were removed. How little real beauty there is to be seen among them must be obvious to any one who compares them with the bevies of fresh-coloured, elegantly-shaped Greek and other Levantine girls who are tripping along the muddy foot-paths every day, and at all hours of the day, to say nothing of the dainty European ladies out for a shopping in their sedan-chairs, each of them looking like a little Madonna in a glass case. As an ordinary sight inside a Turkish carriage here, you have the ample Georgian dowager, lolling back in her carriage, a shapeless mass of obesity, uneasily blowing and groaning; there, in the next vehicle, the faded shadow of a Circassian belle, thin and skinny, leaning forward with eager curiosity, flirting with her yashmak, anxious to attract attention, the vacuity of her mind visible through all her affected liveliness, the spell of her smile made haggard by the paint on her cheeks, the black dye on her hair, eyebrows, and even eyelids. Of the genuine article of youthful female beauty little indeed makes its appearance. How it was that Mohammed peopled his Paradise with houris must be obvious to those who consider how scarce loveliness is for his votaries on earth—

how rare and how dear to be had—*dear* in every respect.

If the Turks cannot be broken of their habit of buying the mothers of their children, how much more difficult it must be to wean them from the practice of procuring by money the servants of their households. A Circassian youth, by name Sahli, applied in November, 1875, at the British Consulate, stating that one Hassan Cadi had sold him at the place in Constantinople called Sultan Mehemet at the price of 400 piastres (£4 10*s.*) to one Ibrahim Aga, a well-known slave-dealer. The dealer's khan was, he said, in the Slave-market Khan, where ten or twelve other lads were on sale. The Consul, Sir Philip Francis, told me that he had no redress for the boy. A few days later another lad appeared, about eighteen years old, the slave of one Rushdi Effendi, a *defterdar,* or collecter of the revenue, of Yemen, now residing at Aleppo. The boy's master had sold him to Solyman Agha, of Eyoob, another notorious trader in slaves, who had again disposed of him to a cavass, or guard, of the Porte and—therein lay the main offence—for the vile sum of eight lire. "Eight lire," cried the boy indignantly, "is the price one pays for a donkey," and rather than submit to the indignity, he had given his new master the slip and placed himself under the protection of the Consul, who, in this case, as the boy was an Abyssinian, and as such the subject of a State friendly to England and unrepresented at the Porte, was legally entitled

to grant it. He was afterwards employed as a freeman in a gentleman's stable, where he gave satisfaction.

Within the same week two female slaves were thrown into the British Consul-General's hands. At Malta, again, three black women were caught who had been exported from Constantinople, intended for the Tunis market. As they were without papers, they were sent back to Constantinople in an English vessel, and the British Consulate was advised thereof by the Malta police. In good faith, or by inadvertence, they were here handed over to the Ottoman authorities, who forthwith delivered them to their original proprietor, declaring that they were "free" persons. Availing themselves of this freedom, the women escaped to the British Consulate, where they were provided with "places;" but their situation must needs be precarious, and they will most probably relapse into slavery, for it is a fact that the lazy, unthrifty habits contracted by slaves in a Turkish household unfit them for free labour.

Had there been any doubt in my mind about the existence of slavery, and of a bold, though clandestine slave-trade in Constantinople, I should have received flagrant evidence of the fact from a young Piedmontese doctor employed in the excellent new Italian hospital rising on one of the minor eminences of Pera-Galata. The young physician had kindly appointed an hour in the day for attendance on outdoor patients, whom he treated without charge, a privilege highly appreciated by Mussulmans of the

quarter in which the hospital is situated. One morning two Turks presented themselves, accompanied by a negress, whom they pointed out as the object of their visit. The doctor had lately settled at Constantinople, and had slight knowledge of Turkish to enable him to commune with his patients. He had therefore to examine his cases minutely, to avoid the risk of misunderstanding a complaint of which he could receive little verbal description. In the case now before him he, of course, felt the woman's pulse, looked at her tongue, and, as the men pointed to her chest, he applied his stethoscope, and found no manner of evil there. In such *lingua Franca* as he could muster, lifting and stretching out both his hands, and shaking his head, the doctor gave the men to understand that there was nothing the matter with the woman. Pleased with the result, one of the men then took the negress by the hand and hurried off with her with little ceremony. The doctor, astonished, stopped the other man, who could speak a few words in French, and asked him what they thought was the woman's ailment. "Nothing," said the man; "but, as my friend has bought her, he wished, before he paid, to make sure that she was sound." The doctor, shocked at the idea of having been applied to as a farrier to warrant cattle at the market-place, ran for a few steps after the woman, to urge the privileges of Italian ground for her deliverance; but little acquainted as he was with the country, a moment's reflection

brought him face to face with the difficulties and dangers he would have to encounter in an enterprise in which he had every chance of being foiled.

Enough, I think, has been stated to prove by these recent and flagrant examples that slaves, white and black, as well as slave-dealers, and all but open slave-markets, exist in Turkey, both in the capital and at least in the Asiatic and African provinces. I may be met with the trite remarks that "slaves are well treated in Turkey; only bad slaves try to get their freedom. Slavery is necessary for a Moslem country; slavery is a domestic institution. It is sanctioned by the Bible. There is a great deal of slavery in a different form in Europe. Slavery is consistent with many national virtues. The slave question is a difficult one, and the Turks do not like discussing it. If we meddle with slavery we incur great responsibility. We cannot do everything. We have known many slave-owners who are good fellows at heart; we have heard of slaves who are not," etc. These were the arguments formerly urged in favour of slavery in the West Indies, in the United States, and elsewhere. They may have their own weight and may be unanswerable in Turkey; but all I can say is that the Sultan and his Government have proclaimed slavery to be an outrage and an abomination. They have solemnly promised to abolish it, pledging themselves to their own subjects and to the European Powers, especially to England, and nevertheless, slavery in Turkey is

much the same as it ever was; as flourishing as it can be in a country where everything is declining. The Government is in this respect, as in so many others, equally useless for good or evil, for the saying is in Turkey that every Firman goes through three stages, being prepared the first day, promulgated the second, and pigeon-holed the third."

As every Firman is merely a make-believe, and its authors simply promise what they do not mean to maintain, they never bestow a thought on the practicability of any scheme, or the opportuneness of any measure. In pursuance of the reforms announced in the Iradé of December, 1875, the Grand Vizier Mahmoud Nedim in the ensuing January issued a decree providing for a more regular collection of the taxes. In the scheme for the reorganisation of the police, it was stated that one of the four categories into which that service was to be divided consisted of the tax-gatherers. These were henceforth to constitute a separate and special corps, and to be chosen among respectable men enjoying the public confidence; they must be able to read and write, and give a suitable "caution," bail, or security, for their good conduct. Two or three collectors would be appointed for each district, Mussulmans in Mussulman, and Christians in Christian districts; in localities inhabited by a mixed population they would be appointed in equal numbers from among Christians and Mussulmans. These functionaries were strictly, and under heavy penalties, to be

forbidden living, as the zaptiehs or policemen had hitherto done, at the expense of the taxpayers. They must neither exact nor accept anything for themselves or for their horses. Their pay was to be proportionate to the importance of the localities to which their "beat" or circuit should extend. The Mukhtars or Mayors of the villages, who, it was to be hoped, would be chosen among a less rascally set of men than the former ones, would be eligible to the tax-gatherer's office.

This important and most desirable reform, we were told, would involve "no new or additional expense to the State," as these new functionaries were only to supersede the zaptiehs who had been hitherto charged with the collection of the taxes. But this assertion was a palpable absurdity; for the outrageous conduct of the policemen, in whatever capacity they might be employed, in a great measure arose from the necessity in which their wretched pay—30 piastres, or 5*s.* a month when it was paid—placed them of providing for their sustenance by any unlawful means their unpopular office suggested. It was the Government's false economy in underpaying all its officials that made them all thieves, and the new functionaries would be no better unless they received more liberal treatment. A good administration in a State, like cleanliness in a household, is a luxury which the poor or improvident can ill afford; and it is most unfortunate that the Government of the Porte should have waited to

think of reform till this juncture, when its extravagance, brought about by the facility which encouraged it to live by contracting loan after loan, had brought it to the very verge of bankruptcy.

The reader need hardly be told, that of this separation of the tax-gatherer's duties from those of the policeman, nothing was ever attempted during the reign of Abd-ul-Aziz, and as yet nothing achieved under his successors. The collection of tithes and taxes continued to be carried on in the same clumsy, arbitrary, and ruthless manner. In this respect the discontent is as rife among the true believers as among the Giaours, for the intolerable public burdens weigh equally on all classes, and nothing is safe from the rapacity of the Government officials, high and low. An idea of Turkish rule in those Asiatic regions where the Mussulmans constitute the majority, may be formed from the treatment of those provinces of Asia Minor which, as I stated, were ravaged by the famine of 1873-4. In Angora alone—a territory twice as large as the British Islands, with a population of 3,000,000—this scourge, caused by a combination of a terrible drought, followed by an unusually severe winter and by a destructive murrain, swept off by starvation 40,000 souls, caused a loss in money of several hundred thousand pounds, threw vast tracts of land out of cultivation, and utterly crushed the energies and spirits of the impoverished, helpless peasantry. The Government, who at first did nothing to relieve the famine, and even denied

its existence, shamed at last by the generous example of Scotch, English, and American residents, did something of what was expected of it in aid of the sufferers. It did it however in a hesitating, half-hearted way, proving its unfitness to meet the emergency, the impression of eye-witnesses being that "the first and great thought of most servants of the State, whether acting in more honourable or more humble capacity, was, when the work of relief was referred to them, how they could secure the largest portion for themselves."

The calamity had done its worst, and the condition in which it had left the population was so deplorable that the Porte deemed it necessary to relieve them from the payment of the arrears of taxes previous to 1872-3, amounting to about £1,500,000, and also to reduce the tithe on produce by 2½, reverting to the original tenth. Decrees to that effect were publicly read by the Vali, or Governor-General, who also announced reforms in the mounted police, a body of picturesque but ruthless ruffians who plundered the people both in the Government's name and on their own account. A new Vali was, however, soon appointed—seven of them were changed in three years—who ignored the Sultan's decrees, and declared that "his business was to collect, not to remit taxes." The grinding of the people was more unsparing than ever; application being made for the land-tax both for the present and, in advance, for the next year. The tax imposed

on Christians for exemption from military service was levied without mercy, "the well-to-do people being held answerable for the sums due by a whole community under threat of imprisonment or confiscation, and the still half-famished people, even those who lived on charity, being compelled to sell their winter provisions, and to shear their flocks in the heart of winter, to meet the new exactions enforced at the sword's point by the police, whose violence so exceeded all bounds that the Mukhtars, or Mayors, of Christian communities forbade women and children to venture from their houses, no matter on what errand."

These, and even worse atrocities, of which I could give authentic particulars, were suggested to the Government by their anxiety to meet their liabilities to their creditors, and to enable them to pay the half-coupon of the debt, a design which, if it was ever seriously harboured, a combination of adverse circumstances was soon destined to frustrate.

Again, I stated, or should have stated, that the decree abolishing the *corvée*, or compulsory labour, was overlooked, not only in distant provinces, but even at Constantinople, where the hackney coachmen were made to convey the wounded from the bridge pier to the Seraskier's hospital without payment; and as some of these objected to this compulsory deed of charity, and insisted on their fare, they were sent about their business with smart blows from the flat of the officers' sabres. And we read a few

days later that the *Mutessariff* or District Governor of Sofia, in the Province of the Danube, had compelled the peasants in the neighbourhood to carry, without payment each of them two cart-loads of stones for his new *conak*, or residence, an eight to ten hours' distance. It seemed as difficult to bring the rulers to understand their duties as to encourage the people to stand upon their rights. The Governor of another district in the same province, a well-meaning and deservedly popular Pasha, read on January the 11th the Firman of Reforms to the people assembled before his house door. He read it in the Turkish language, in which it had been sent to him, and then he concluded in the Slavic vernacular: "You see, my children, the Padishah is anxious to promote your well-being; and so everything will be going on just as it has always done, and you need feel no uneasiness. Allah bless you!" And the multitude clapped their hands and cheered, and separated amid shouts of "Long years to the Pasha!" The good old man never intended that as a joke, and he was speaking with perfectly good faith. He was also literally correct, for the Firman announced nothing new and was professedly a repetition of the Hatti-Sheriff and Hatti-Humayoun, which he himself carried out to the best of his powers and according to his lights; for, unquestionably, there are good, and just, and provident Pashas, and some of them have left their marks on their respective provinces, where their names are recorded with reverence and affec-

tion. But the integrity and goodwill of individuals are powerless against the universal corruption of a whole Administration. It is not much consolation to hear that in a province of Armenia a punctiliously righteous Vali has ordered certain taxes which had been unjustly levied to be instantly paid back in cash to the last penny—when we also know that in other districts people who had paid all they owed to the collector were cast into prison and bidden to pay for the defaulting members of their community, and never released till, by dint of ill-treatment, they were made to borrow the money demanded of them, for which they had to give the wool still growing on the backs of their sheep as security !

It was from the beginning very clear to all that did not wilfully blind themselves to the truth that, bad as things were under the old system, they were not likely to mend upon a first attempt at innovation, at least for an incalculably long time, for the great evil of Turkey was the financial disorder, and no improvement was possible so long as in order to satisfy the public creditor the Porte was compelled to grind its subjects and to stint the pay of its functionaries. As I have before stated, every contemplated measure of reform would involve increased expenditure. A good administration will in time lead to economy, but its first establishment must needs cause fresh embarrassment.

Still the radical disorder of the Ottoman society must be sought in the difference long established

by all the institutions of the country, the most benevolent as well as the most inhuman, between the different classes of the population; and the Government of the Porte felt it so deeply that the December Firman of Reforms promised a novel order of things which should extend the same beneficial measures and establish the same political rights in behalf of the whole people, apart from all difference of creed and race. But I need hardly multiply the instances in which that essential principle of equality before the law, which was to be the palladium of Ottoman liberties, was openly, flagrantly, and as it were unconsciously violated not only by the subaltern authorities in remote provinces, but also by the central Government itself in its official acts; witness the Vizirial letter of January, 1876, which bade the Christians in Pera to remove from the houses in the so-called Mussulman-quarters, which they had been allowed to rent when the great fire of 1870 had made them homeless. Different creeds must continue to live in distinct Ghettos, as Jews did in Rome under the Pope, and a subject was not to be free to buy or rent a house which another subject might be willing to sell or let to him! The police, for the reorganisation of which a decree was in the same month published, was to be divided into four categories, in three of which it was distinctly stated that the officials should be "equally chosen among all the classes of the population," while, with respect to the first category, that "*de la police proprement*

dite," the clause about such equality was carefully omitted, because it was not intended that non-Mussulmans should be admitted into the force.

And by another decree announcing the principle of a new Electoral Law for Provincial and Municipal Councils, also published in January, 1876, it was provided that the number of non-Mussulman members should be equal to that of the Mussulman members, an arrangement which must needs greatly limit the freedom of choice in those provinces or districts in which either the Moslem or the Rayah element greatly preponderates. In European Turkey, for instance, a Mussulman minority of 3,619,353 would both in courts and councils meet the majority of 4,776,652 non-Mussulmans on equal terms. In Crete, where the law was already in operation, 162,000 Christians were placed in the same conditions as 38,000 Mohammedans. Indeed, it seemed that in an electoral law based on principles of equality, any mention of religious difference might advantageously have been omitted. Some people suppose that to bring the Moslem and the Rayah together to the polls would be an impossible undertaking, and that it would be found expedient to form separate constituencies in different localities with reference to their respective creeds, the division between the two races which despotism has hitherto maintained being thus perpetuated under what was meant for a more liberal and equitable *régime*. It, however, seemed clear to many, that no real remedy

could be found for the disorders of Turkey, save in such measures as might tend to the mitigation of the inveterate hostility of races.

We shall in due time have occasion to see the same invidious distinction, the same illiberal separation maintained in the provisions of the Midhat constitution, among those very articles which seemed professedly intended to abolish such differences, and in despite of the prolonged discussions by which the opposition in the Chamber of Deputies endeavoured to bring the letter and the spirit of the organic law into something like harmony and consistency; so difficult it has always been, and will probably for ever be in Turkey to make the deeds agree with the words.

The disabilities of the Christians, however, were far more cruelly felt in the courts of law than at the polls, for the administration of justice in Turkey was and is still mainly in the hands of Cadis, or judges, connected with the Mohammedan establishment, and interpreters of the *Sher-i*, or sacred law based on the Koran, in obedience to which the depositions of Giaours, or unbelievers, are not admitted as evidence. Exceptions to this rule was made in the commercial and in some other mixed tribunals, but the rule was and is still observed, in spite of many decrees, and of the bold assertions both of Turks and Turkophiles to the contrary. The resource of a Christian was, almost necessarily, bribery, and that was and is carried on to such an extent

both among the magistrates and among the privileged Moslem witnesses, that justice may be said to be put up to auction, and knocked down to the highest bidder. And this, of course, only when the interested parties moved in the matter, and had both the money and the courage and perseverance to stand upon their rights and claim their dues, for otherwise there was hardly official initiative, hardly any public prosecution, the most heinous criminals too often escaping with perfect impunity, either thanks to the apathy, incapacity, and inefficiency of the police, or to the venality, and sometimes sheer ignorance, carelessness, and dilatoriness of the judges.

A very terrible instance of the extent to which the ends of justice could be defeated in Turkey fell under my immediate observation during my stay in Pera.

A double murder of a mysterious and startling nature was brought to light in that city, in February, 1876, bearing in its repulsive features some resemblance to the horrors with which the revelations of Whitechapel and of the Roman Railway Station had lately filled the English and Italian public. A respectable Armenian merchant, residing at Kadikeui, across the Bosphorus, near Scutari, left at his death five children, among whom was shared his patrimony, amounting to 2,300 Turkish lire. Two of his daughters, unmarried, by name Euphémie and Philomène Hamalik, had received, between three and four years before, £T.450 each, and on the 12th of August,

1875, £T.75 each, the residue of their paternal inheritance. Both of them lived in Pera, apart from the rest of their family—one, Philomène, aged twenty-eight, in lodging in the Rue-Tarla-bashi, in the house of a café-keeper, by name Hadji Vassili, a Greek; the other, Euphémie, aged thirty-two, at a house in the Rue Agha Hamam, a Greek butcher's. The sisters took to immoral courses, and their irregular life was a source of great unhappiness to the surviving members of their family. In the summer of 1875 they sold a house that belonged to them, and were reported to have expressed their intention of leaving the country on a trip to Vienna. They presently disappeared, and nothing was heard respecting them till the 7th of February, 1876, when their dead bodies were found, that of each of the women in her own apartment, Philomène in her night-dress, lying upon the floor near the bed, with her hair in disorder, a terrible knife wound in the abdomen, and the traces round her neck of a rope with which she had been strangled; Euphémie was also found in her bed-clothes, under the bed, with the head nearly severed from the body. They had, to all appearances, both been murdered in the same night, each in her own lodgings, in two different quarters of the town. All valuables had disappeared in both apartments, that of Philomène especially being thoroughly stripped. The bodies were in an advanced state of decomposition, and the odour that pervaded the premises was described as horrible.

That the apartments should for six months have remained vacant, and that no inquiry should have been made for the missing women, is one of the most striking incidents of the case. Philomène had paid her rent up to October, but even after that date the café-keeping landlord took no measures to get a new tenant, a circumstance which, coupled with the fact that the blood of the murdered woman oozed through the ceiling of a room inhabited by him, tended to criminate him as at least privy to the deed. The butcher at whose house Euphémie resided, on the contrary, when the paid term expired, in the same month of October, applied to Euphémie's brother, who, alarmed at the prolonged absence of his sisters, at last called in the assistance of the police. These contented themselves with making inquiries and sending the names and photographs of the missing women to the authorities at Vienna, Paris, and Marseilles—of course with no results. At last the butcher became impatient, insisting on obtaining possession of the vacant apartment, and, on breaking open the door, the terrible discovery was made, the police being easily led from one house to the other.

Shortly before the women's disappearance a Jew stockbroker of Galata, by name David Abravanel, who was on intimate terms with Philomène, received from her a sum of £T.50 with some jewels, which were entrusted to him for safe keeping; but he averred that he returned these valuables to her shortly afterwards, and that he held her acknowledgment in

writing to that effect. He was also said to be the man who spread the report of the girl's departure for Vienna, and who hired a porter to carry three large and heavy chests from Philomène's lodgings to the Kadikeui steamer, but this he firmly denied. Both he and the porter, as well as the two landlords, were arrested, and with them a watchman, who stated that about the time of the disappearance he, being on duty in the Rue Agha Hamam, heard the cry of "Yanghen var!" (Fire!) from Euphémie's house, and saw a man leaving it, but, as the cries speedily ceased, he did not think it necessary to take notice of the occurrence.

The inquiry into this atrocious affair was tamely carried on for a few weeks. The Greek coffee-house keeper, Hadji Vassili, was still under arrest, and from the first there seemed to be no doubt as to his guilt. This man bore the very worst character, as it was known that he had repeatedly been sentenced to imprisonment for robbery and murder, and, upon making his escape, he terrorised the neighbourhood by the savage vengeance he wreaked upon the persons who had been instrumental in bringing about his conviction. The dread his name inspired among the lower classes of Greeks, Jews, and Albanians in Pera engendered a belief that he would yet come off unscathed even from the present ordeal, no one daring to come forward with evidence against him; while M. Abravanel, who satisfactorily proved that his connection with Philomène Hamalik was completely

at an end a considerable time before the sisters' mysterious disappearance, was kept in durance till the middle of March, the police being unwilling to lose the least chance of extorting money from him. Such is the way justice is only too generally administered in the Sultan's dominions.

More than a year passed: the tragedy of the two sisters Hamalik was either completely forgotten or had lost all its sad interest, when, towards the end of May of this year, 1877, it was announced that the case had again been brought before Court. Hadji Vassili, being convicted of the chief offence, a premeditated double murder and robbery, with every aggravation of stupid cold-blooded ferocity, was said (for as yet no sentence has been published) to have been condemned to fifteen years' imprisonment, a punishment against the severity of which he appealed. Meanwhile an alleged accomplice of his, a Circassian officer, by name Hassan Agha, was summoned as a witness, and came into Court, ostentatiously displaying a pair of pistols and an ataghan at his belt, and sat down with scornful unconcern, unrebuked by the judge. As it resulted from the evidence that he had had some connection with the girl Euphémie, and there was a strong presumption that he had a hand in the deed which deprived her of life, he was put under arrest. The matter, however, is not unlikely to go to sleep for another year, the murderers making the best of their time in a prison which is never severe except in cases of political offenders, and

only enduring confinement because they will not take the little trouble it would cost them to break from it, as they prefer it to exile, and are only too confident that it will end in their eventual acquittal.

Another case, of even a darker dye, was reported later in the year 1876, about midsummer, from Broussa. Two young men—both natives of the Levant, I believe, but one of them an Italian subject, named Valle; another, Longford, an English subject—went out together one morning on a shooting excursion, in the immediate neighbourhood of the town. As they were entering a wood, they were received by a volley of rifle-shots, and the Italian, mortally struck, fell to the ground. His companion raised him and attempted to carry him in his arms for a few steps, but being pursued by the shots of the still invisible aggressors, he lost heart, dropped the apparently lifeless body, and thought only of his own safety. He, however, soon returned to the spot, accompanied by some of the people and by the police he had met on his way to the town, when the Italian's body was found not only pierced through and through by several rifle-balls, but also savagely mutilated and disfigured, while his watch, purse, and other portable property were left untouched about him. His death was evidently the result of a deed of vengeance, and the apparent cause was to be sought in an exchange of silly but somewhat offensive words which had occurred a few days before between some European dragomans and other at-

tendants idling at the door of the Italian Consulate, and three intoxicated Turkish soldiers who happened to pass that way, in consequence of which the soldiers broke into the premises of the Consulate, a violation of privilege for which the Consul had them duly punished. The murdered young man was probably mistaken by the soldiers for the Italian Consul, to whom he bore some resemblance. At all events, there seemed to be no doubt in Broussa as to the persons to whom the deed of blood could easily be traced. The Vali, or Governor-General of the Province, Veli Pasha, however, telegraphed to the central authorities at Stamboul, giving all the particulars of the event, and adding that Valle had in all probability been murdered by his companion, the young Englishman, Longford ; at the same time either the Vali or the Stamboul authorities withheld for twenty-four hours the telegrams addressed from Broussa to the Italian and English Consulates in Pera-Galata. Agents from the Italian Legation and the English Consulate were sent to the spot, and as there was nothing to substantiate the charge against the Englishman, he was, of course, dismissed ; but it was found altogether vain to urge the Governor to further proceedings in the case, which was thus for ever dropped. Crimes of that nature were only too frequent in Turkey at that time, both in the capital and in the provinces, and their perpetrators grew in audacity in proportion as the incapacity of the police and the leniency of the courts of law seemed to conspire to

ensure their impunity. About this same time, on the 5th of July, a Frenchman—the gardener of the Viceroy of Egypt at Beikos, opposite to Therapia, across the Strait, on the Asiatic side, was killed in his bed with his wife, by ruffians whose object was evidently not plunder, as no article of the property of the murdered pair was removed from its place. Those were already the days of Sultan Murad, and we read in the papers that "His Majesty had been graciously pleased to remit one-third of the penalty to all persons condemned for crimes and misdemeanours (*crimes et délits*)." What with the impotence of the law and the arbitrary power of the Sovereign, the Ottoman Empire ran the risk of becoming a more pleasant country for *messieurs les assassins* than for honest people.

Another murder or massacre was, however, perpetrated some time before which the Government of the Porte could not so easily overlook, and the consequences of which were soon to assume an historical importance. I allude to the "Salonica Assassinations."

A Christian girl, Greek or Bulgarian, from the village of Avret Hissar, in the neighbourhood of that city, arrived, on Friday, the 9th of May, in the evening, at the railway-station in the company of her mother. She wore the *ferejeh* and *yasmak* of the Mussulman women, and it was stated that she had embraced, or wished to embrace, Islamism. Other accounts were to the effect that either the girl her-

self or her mother, upon alighting on the platform, called for help, declaring that the girl was a Christian, and was being taken from her friends by force. The result was a scuffle between the police on duty at the spot and a certain number of Christians who happened to be, or had purposely assembled, at the station ; that the zaptiehs were overpowered, and the girl was borne away by the Christians in the carriage of the American Consul, which, it was asserted, chanced to be there in waiting for its owner, who, however, had missed the train, and did not arrive at the time he had appointed. The girl was then safely lodged in some Christian house, from which she was made to pass into the Greek and then into the German Consulate. Meanwhile a great excitement arose among the Mussulman population (the day being Friday, the Mohammedan festive-day), which continued through the night, and on the morrow 5000 men, we were told, paraded the streets of the town with flags and music, and went up to the *konak*, or residence of the Vali, Mehemet Refeet Pasha, claiming the girl. The Governor-General engaged to see justice done; but the crowd, not well satisfied with this half promise, proceeded to the Mosque Saatly-Djami, near the Vali's palace, still clamouring for the girl. The Consuls of France and Germany, Messrs. Moulin and Abbot, happened to be out at the time, and were either so imprudent or so zealous for the public peace as to venture into the mosque. They were there set upon by the mob,

who shut them up as prisoners or hostages; and the Governor, after some delay, went to their rescue, engaging that the girl should soon be found and delivered to the Mussulman authorities. As the promise could not be fulfilled with sufficient promptness, the rioters laid violent hands on the Consuls, and put them to death, stabbing them and beating them with the iron bars which they tore from the windows, the butchery being accomplished just as the girl was traced to her hiding-place and hurried to the mosque. The multitude then, their rage appeased, was easily dispersed.

The outrage was probably unpremeditated; but there seems to have been for some time ill-blood between the Christian and the Mussulman population, and the European Consuls had a few weeks before held a meeting, in which it was resolved that a warning should be conveyed to the Governor that disturbances were to be apprehended. The English Consul, Mr. Blunt, it was said, had refused to join his colleagues in this demonstration, and even advised the Vali to take no notice of the warning.

The commotion created by this event in the little world at Pera was tremendous, especially among the Levantine dragomans and other hangers-on of the embassies and legations, with whom the two victims of the savage deed had an extensive connection. The slain German Consul, Mr. Abbot, was of English extraction, and a British subject. His fellow-sufferer, M. Moulin, was a born Frenchman, and a *Consul de*

Carrière, or regularly appointed and salaried Consul. Both of them were married to Greek ladies of distinction, and connected through their wives with each other, and with the Ottoman Ministers at Rome and Brussels. The American Consul was a Greek; Mr. Blunt, the British Consul, also a Levantine. The French Consul was young, highly esteemed, lately married, and he left a young wife with two children, and the prospect of a third. The German Consul, also young, married, and with children, had the reputation of a very determined Turkophile. It was said of him that he had been lately in Pera, and, contrary to his wont, had shown great depression of spirits, and to those who had endeavoured to rally him, he had confessed that he was haunted by gloomy forebodings, and as if in expectation of his coming end.

The remonstrances of the Pera diplomatists at the interview they had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Rashid Pasha, immediately upon the news of the tragic occurrence reaching Constantinople, obtained from the Government of the Porte the promise of a compliance with all their demands. These were—1. The appointment of a Commission of Inquiry, the members of which were General Eshret Pasha, the new Governor of Salonica; Vahan Effendi, a Christian, Under-Secretary of State of the Ministry of Justice; the German Consul-General, M. Gillet, with M. Tischendorff, Dragoman of the German Embassy, and M. Robert, Dragoman of the French Embassy

(Sir Henry Elliot, regardless of the fact that the murdered Abbot was an English subject, refused to send a representative); 2. A solemn funeral in honour of the dead, to be attended by all the civil and military authorities at Salonica, and especially by the Imam and Mollahs of the mosque which was polluted by the blood of the victims of Mohammedan fanaticism; 3. A declaration by the Sultan, expressive of the grief, indignation, and "shame" with which he had heard of the savage deed by which his own Moslems would be held up to the execration of civilised nations; and, 4. The severe punishment of the guilty, and the prevention of similar offences for the future, by most stringent responsibilities being laid on all public functionaries, and by the suppression of those Turkish prints which made appeals to the fanatic passions of Mohammedans by preaching the Holy War.

It was expected at the time that those promises would not be strictly fulfilled, and, in fact, the Porte showed its usual ingenuity in evading them. The alleged perpetrators of the murder of the Consuls were brought for trial before the Court at Salonica, and eleven of them were found guilty. Six of them were executed, and the five others were supposed to have been respited in obedience to the general amnesty announced by the new Sultan's Proclamation, the probability being that they would have to undergo some milder punishment. About twenty other persons, all of obscure rank, were also convicted

of some degree of complicity and condemned to different terms of imprisonment. Of the instigators or abettors of the crime, of the Mollahs or Imams of the mosque where the blood of the two Consuls was spilt, not one was brought to trial, and no question was even raised with respect to them.

There remained to be taken into consideration the conduct of the Vali, or Governor-General of the Province, and of the other men in authority under him—*i.e.* the Head of the Police, the Colonel in command of the Forces, and the commander of the corvette stationed in the harbour—and with respect to them the Government only came to a decision several months afterwards, and only upon repeated demands and even menaces of the French and German Ambassadors. The Governor-General was charged—1. With having exercised an undue pressure upon the two Consuls to induce them to obtain from the Christians the delivery of the girl, when it should have been his duty to help them out of the difficult and dangerous position they were in at the mosque, where they saw themselves surrounded by a large and excited Mussulman mob. It was in obedience to this pressure that the German Consul, Mr. Abbot, saw himself compelled to write to his brother, entreating him to do his utmost to find the girl and convey her immediately to the mosque. 2. With having made no attempt to protect the Consuls while they were being assassinated, though the murder was committed in a small narrow room,

in the presence of ten armed zaptiehs, or policemen, and of two police-officers, besides the members of the Mejliss, Municipal or Provincial Council, who might have held the assassins in check until the arrival of the armed force which had been summoned to the spot. It had been indisputably proved that while the Consuls received thirty knife-wounds each, neither the Vali nor any other person present in the room was hurt by a single scratch. 3. With having left the bodies of the Consuls, after the murder, in the possession of the mob, by whom they were trodden and spat upon and exposed to extreme indignities, even long after the arrival of the armed force. The conclusion against the Vali was, in short, that he acted throughout in obedience to religious feelings, and abstained from any exercise of such authority as might have awed the mob, and saved the lives of the Consuls. The evidence against the Chief of the Police was to the effect that he encouraged the Consuls to go into the mosque; but this rests on the testimony of only one witness, contradicted by another. Nor was it satisfactorily established that this officer disposed at the time of sufficient force to enable him to get through the mob to the room where the Consuls, with the Vali and the Council, were shut up. Yet for reasons which the authorities alone seemed to know, neither the court-martial at Salonica nor the Reporter before the Superior Council of War at Constantinople showed any leniency towards him. The evidence against

the Colonel in command of the garrison proved that he was at the mosque when the Vali was there, and received from the latter a verbal order to bring up his troops to the mosque. To this he demurred, saying that he must have a written order, under the authority and seal of the Mejliss. This, of course, could not be obtained there and then, and the Colonel lost some time in the mosque before he made up his mind to comply with the Governor's will. He then went up to the fortress, and instead of at once ordering his troops to the mosque, he sent one of his men to the naval officer (who by this time had received orders from the Vali to proceed to the mosque with the marines, and had actually landed 150 of them for that purpose), requesting him to join him (the Colonel) at the fortress. The naval officer disregarded the order of the Vali and complied with the Colonel's request, so that the whole land and sea force remained idle in the fortress while its help was needed at the mosque. Presently there came up to the Colonel the Italian Consul and the *chancelier*, or clerk, of the French Consulate, with urgent entreaties to that officer to proceed instantly to the mosque. The Colonel, very civilly, offered coffee and cigarettes to the Consul and *chancelier*, and instead of starting at once, and showing any readiness to accede to their request, he very elaborately endeavoured to convince the two foreign officials of the propriety and expediency of having the girl restored to the Moslems. Thirty-six

minutes were thus lost in this idle discussion ; at the expiration of which a messenger came to inform the Colonel that the girl had been found and was being conveyed to the mosque. Thereupon the Colonel and the naval officer marched with their men to the mosque, and reached the place ten minutes after the assassination of the Consuls.

We learnt in process of time how the court-martial sent from Constantinople to judge these functionaries at Salonica disposed of their cases. The Chief of the Police was condemned to degradation and one year's imprisonment, and the military and naval officers to forty-five days' imprisonment each. The Vali was left to be dealt with by the Porte.

On the application of the French and German Embassies, the sentences of the Salonica court-martial were cancelled, and the prisoners ordered to undergo a new trial before the Supreme Council of War, sitting at the Seraskierate, or War Office, at Constantinople. This Council held several sittings, at the first of which one of its members read his report, reviewing the facts in evidence, and recommending the following conclusions :

1. That the Council declare itself incompetent to try the Vali, who, although himself a military officer, was at the time principally a civil functionary.

2. That the Chief of the Police be made to suffer, besides degradation, ten years' seclusion, or confinement in a fortress.

3. That the Colonel and the naval officer be condemned to degradation and three years' confinement in a fortress.

Upon the report being submitted to the foreign Diplomatic Representatives, the French and German Embassies, and, with some reserves, also the English Embassy, considering that the assassination of the Consuls was the consequence of an *émeute armée*, or armed riot, were of opinion that the Colonel and the naval officer were liable to charges involving a much heavier punishment than the ridiculously lenient one (now cancelled) awarded by the Salonica court-martial, and also a more severe penalty than that recommended by the Reporter to the Supreme Council of War. The French and German Embassies, therefore, declared themselves not satisfied with the Reporter's conclusions, and made new, stronger, and more urgent applications to the Porte, whose drift evidently seemed to be to gain time by throwing hindrances in the way of the continuation of the trial.

Acting, at last, upon these fresh remonstrances and incitements, the Reporter of the Superior Council of War proposed:

1. That the Chief of the Police who at Salonica had been condemned to degradation and ten years' imprisonment, should be sent to a fortress as a prisoner for fifteen years.

2. That the Colonel in command of the garrison, and the commander of the corvette stationed at

the port, who had been let off with forty-five days' imprisonment each, should both be condemned to degradation and ten years' imprisonment in a fortress.

With respect to the Vali, who had both the civil and military command of the city and province, the report declared the Council incompetent to give judgment. The Supreme Court-martial gave sentence accordingly. The condemned officers were sent to remote State fortresses, where they are supposed to expiate their offences; but whence they have probably been before this time, or will soon be, secretly set at liberty. The Vali was, a few months later, declared to be incapable of filling any public office under the Government of the Porte. With respect to the handsome indemnity of £35,000 to be allowed to the widows and children of the murdered Consuls, it was only paid when the Ambassadors of France and Germany threatened to demand their passports unless the Sultan's Government instantly fulfilled its promises and obligations.

It is needless to say that, even after their demands were satisfied to this extent, the representatives of the foreign Powers, and especially the French Ambassador, were far from convinced that justice had been done. The eleven wretches who suffered capital punishment at Salonica were common malefactors, obnoxious to the Turkish populace, and scarcely worth the rope with which they were hanged, and of the real instigators of the murders not one was ever brought to trial, the Government

not daring to rouse the fury which would have been kindled among the Mohammedans should it have been known that only one drop of precious Mussulman blood had been spilt to atone for the blood of two Giaour victims.

THE BASHI-BAZOUKS' WAR-SONG.

An Ulema poet has composed the following war-song, which is sung by the Ottoman soldiers, regular and irregular, with great effect.

BLESSED by our faith and by our calling, our name is in all men's mouths; we are the theme of all men's talk; we, the warlike people of the ever-bloody sword; we are the sons of heroes—and are heroes ourselves. The sword of the soldier ennobles bad deeds, and the glitter of its steel lights up the page of history!

Ever ready for the fight, the field of battle is for us our wedding-feast. Our existence is war. We are the warriors of the ever-bloody sword; sons of heroes—heroes ourselves.

We know how to give up our lives gladly. We march eagerly to battle, where we joy to find death and the martyr's crown. We, the warriors of the ever-bloody sword; sons of heroes—heroes ourselves.

We, being united, we shall sweep the human race from the surface of the earth. Our trade is the trade of war. We are the warriors of the ever-bloody sword; sons of heroes—heroes ourselves.

God is with us. He helps us. The Prophet leads us. Both guide our arms. Warm be our zeal for our holy traditions. Blind be our obedience to our chiefs, ever brave and bold. We are the warriors of the ever-bloody sword; sons of heroes—heroes ourselves.

Our patterns are our glorious ancestors, who as lions conquered this land. Let us imitate them and defend with the sabre the heritage they have left us. We, the warriors of the ever-bloody sword; sons of heroes—heroes ourselves.

Let all men understand this truth, that by the will of God we are the sons of our fathers. Brave and fortunate as they, we, too, are the warriors of the ever-bloody sword; sons of heroes—we too are heroes.

END OF VOL. I.

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